

Complete Ideological Discoveries

Ben Huot

November 28, 2010

Complete Ideological Discoveries

Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 1 First Things | 11 |
| 1.1 Logo | 12 |
| 1.2 For More Information | 12 |
| 1.3 Cover Graphic | 13 |
| 1.4 License | 13 |
| 1.5 Introduction | 14 |
| 2 Theoretical Breakthroughs | 17 |
| 2.1 Intellectual Breakthroughs | 18 |
| 2.1.1 Philosophical Positions | 18 |
| 2.1.2 College Education | 21 |
| 2.1.3 Philosophy of Religion | 25 |
| 2.1.4 Striking Back | 29 |
| 2.2 Social Breakthroughs | 40 |
| 2.2.1 Religion | 40 |
| 2.2.2 Innocence Lost | 44 |
| 2.2.3 The Public Mind and American Democ- racy | 47 |
| 2.2.4 The Protestant Ethic | 49 |
| 2.2.5 Capitalism and Atheism | 55 |
| 2.2.6 What If? | 66 |
| 2.3 Emotional Breakthroughs | 74 |
| 2.3.1 Son of Strength | 74 |
| 2.3.2 Heaven and Earth | 76 |
| 2.3.3 The Breakthrough | 77 |
| 2.4 Nature of God | 82 |
| 2.4.1 Jesus Poetry | 83 |
| 2.4.2 Self Poetry | 86 |
| 2.4.3 Heavenly Father Poetry | 89 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| 2.4.4 Son of God Poetry | 97 |
| 3 Book of Belief | 107 |
| 3.1 The Purpose of Philosophy | 108 |
| 3.1.1 General Ideas | 108 |
| 3.1.2 Psychology in Philosophy | 108 |
| 3.1.3 Schools of Philosophy | 111 |
| 3.2 Main Ideas | 115 |
| 3.2.1 Why Study the Old World? | 115 |
| 3.2.2 Main Objective | 116 |
| 3.2.3 How I Can Both be a Free Thinker and a Christian | 117 |
| 3.3 Ethical Vision | 119 |
| 3.3.1 Why Avoid Objectivity? | 119 |
| 3.3.2 Definitions | 120 |
| 3.3.3 Radical Equality | 121 |
| 3.3.4 Redundancy | 123 |
| 3.4 Spiritual Vision | 126 |
| 3.4.1 No Perfect Solution | 126 |
| 3.4.2 How to Help Our World | 128 |
| 3.4.3 Solutions for Our Addictions | 129 |
| 3.4.4 Why So Negative? | 131 |
| 3.5 Personal Religious Experience | 131 |
| 3.5.1 Why am I a Christian? | 131 |
| 3.5.2 My Testimony | 132 |
| 3.5.3 My Approach to Christianity | 135 |
| 3.6 Religion and the Church | 136 |
| 3.6.1 What is the Best Church? | 136 |
| 3.6.2 What About Sexual Morality? | 137 |
| 3.6.3 Why Don't I Work with Others? | 138 |
| 3.6.4 Why are Christians so Mean? | 139 |
| 3.7 Christian Theology | 151 |
| 3.7.1 The Covenant with God | 151 |
| 3.7.2 Central Biblical Paradox | 164 |
| 3.7.3 Advantages and Dangers of Mysticism | 165 |
| 3.8 Religion and Politics | 167 |
| 3.8.1 Losing Our Souls | 167 |
| 3.8.2 Why America Needs God | 168 |
| 3.8.3 The Church and Education | 169 |
| 3.9 Secular Philosophy | 171 |
| 3.9.1 Rationalism in Philosophy | 171 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| 3.9.2 Do Atheists Have Values? | 172 |
| 3.10 Religious Issues | 174 |
| 3.10.1 Philosophy and Religion | 174 |
| 3.10.2 Popular Misconceptions about Philosophy and Religion | 175 |
| 3.10.3 The Kind of Christianity I am Promoting | 176 |
| 3.10.4 Another Perspective on Orthodoxy . . . | 176 |
| 3.10.5 Rich White Men | 178 |
| 3.11 The Bible and Making Decisions | 179 |
| 3.11.1 What Defines Us | 179 |
| 3.11.2 What Does Freedom Mean? | 180 |
| 3.11.3 The Biblical Approach to Suffering . . | 186 |
| 3.11.4 Heaven, Eternity, and God | 187 |
| 3.11.5 What We Should Do | 189 |
| 3.12 Thinking Long Term | 189 |
| 3.12.1 My Perspective | 189 |
| 3.12.2 My Vision of the Future | 191 |
| 3.12.3 Patience | 192 |
| 3.12.4 Perseverance | 194 |
| 3.12.5 Ways to Develop Discipline | 198 |
| 3.13 Learn to be Kind and Patient | 199 |
| 3.13.1 First, Learn from Others' Experiences . | 199 |
| 3.13.2 Second, Broaden your Reading | 199 |
| 3.13.3 Third, Get your own Unique Perspective | 200 |
| 3.13.4 Fourth, Understand that Differences are OK | 200 |
| 3.13.5 Fifth, Learn Communication Skills . . | 200 |
| 3.13.6 Sixth, Learn to Think Empathetically Instead of Purely Fact Based | 200 |
| 3.13.7 Seventh, Learn from Experience | 201 |
| 3.14 Being Creative and Helping Others | 201 |
| 3.14.1 How to Think Creatively | 201 |
| 3.14.2 Creativity and Saving Money | 202 |
| 3.14.3 Theft or Charity | 204 |
| 3.14.4 Reasons to Create Rather than Consume | 206 |
| 3.14.5 Why Volunteer? | 208 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| 4 Positive News about The World | 211 |
| 4.1 American Problems and the Bible | 212 |
| 4.1.1 Where I am Coming From | 212 |
| 4.1.2 American Problems | 213 |
| 4.2 World History | 214 |
| 4.2.1 Role of Technology and Economics . . . | 214 |
| 4.2.2 European Experience | 215 |
| 4.2.3 Asian Experience | 217 |
| 4.3 The US and the World Today | 219 |
| 4.3.1 American Perspective | 219 |
| 4.3.2 Rest of the World | 220 |
| 4.3.3 Comparing the US to the World | 221 |
| 4.4 Limits of Studies | 222 |
| 4.4.1 Limits in Reading | 222 |
| 4.4.2 Limits in Worship | 223 |
| 4.4.3 Limits in Travel | 224 |
| 4.5 Why I Wrote my Books | 225 |
| 4.5.1 Documenting My Experience | 225 |
| 4.5.2 Why Re-Write the Classics? | 225 |
| 4.5.3 Restoring Asian Christianity | 226 |
| 4.6 Gifts from Europe | 227 |
| 4.6.1 New Ideas | 227 |
| 4.6.2 Physical and Spiritual World Complimen- tary | 227 |
| 4.6.3 Value of New Ideas | 228 |
| 4.6.4 Combining the Two | 229 |
| 4.7 Technological Progress | 229 |
| 4.7.1 New Priorities | 230 |
| 4.7.2 Current Trends | 230 |
| 4.7.3 Future Trends | 231 |
| 4.8 The Apocalypse | 232 |
| 4.8.1 Making Predictions | 232 |
| 4.8.2 God will Help Us | 233 |
| 4.9 Peak Oil Worries | 235 |
| 4.9.1 Moderating Factors | 235 |
| 4.9.2 Advantages | 236 |
| 4.9.3 Likelihood of this Situation | 237 |
| 4.10 Worst Case Scenario | 237 |
| 4.10.1 First Obstacles | 237 |
| 4.10.2 Secondary Obstacles | 238 |
| 4.10.3 Final Obstacles | 239 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| 5 More Insights and Inspiration | 243 |
| 5.1 The Power of One | 244 |
| 5.1.1 The Individual | 244 |
| 5.1.2 As a Group | 244 |
| 5.1.3 Keep Working Hard | 246 |
| 5.2 Usefulness of Crises | 246 |
| 5.2.1 Psychology of a Crisis | 246 |
| 5.2.2 Short Attention Span | 247 |
| 5.2.3 The Solution | 248 |
| 5.3 A Different World | 249 |
| 5.3.1 Political and Social Changes | 249 |
| 5.3.2 Future of Society and Technology | 251 |
| 5.3.3 Why I Am Certain | 253 |
| 5.4 Finding Your Approach | 254 |
| 5.4.1 Background | 254 |
| 5.4.2 Information Laws and Rules | 255 |
| 5.4.3 Software Rules | 256 |
| 5.4.4 Media Rules | 257 |
| 5.4.5 Other Information Laws | 259 |
| 6 Topics in Religion and History | 263 |
| 6.1 History Proves Christianity is Asian | 264 |
| 6.1.1 My Home Towns | 264 |
| 6.1.2 Worldwide Perspective | 265 |
| 6.2 What Faith Means to Genuine Devotees | 268 |
| 6.2.1 Types of Religious People | 268 |
| 6.2.2 Characteristics of Genuine Devotee | 269 |
| 6.3 Problems with Church Unity | 271 |
| 6.3.1 Historical Background | 271 |
| 6.3.2 Challenges | 272 |
| 6.3.3 Points of View | 273 |
| 6.3.4 Chance of Success | 274 |
| 6.4 Subtlety and Moderation | 275 |
| 6.4.1 Background | 275 |
| 6.4.2 Techniques | 276 |
| 6.4.3 Challenges | 277 |
| 6.4.4 First Steps | 278 |
| 6.5 What are the Humanities? | 279 |
| 6.5.1 Major Fields of Academic Study | 279 |
| 6.5.2 Variety of Areas to Study | 280 |
| 6.5.3 Importance of All Methods | 281 |

| | | |
|-------|--------------------------------|-----|
| 6.6 | America and the British Empire | 282 |
| 6.6.1 | America | 282 |
| 6.6.2 | Europe | 283 |

Chapter 1

First Things

by Ben Huot

1.1 Logo



1.2 For More Information

For more books and information, visit me on the web at <http://benjamin-newton.com/>

Feel free to send me e-mail regarding the books and website at <mailto:ben@benjamin-newton.com> I even enjoy constructive criticism

1.3 Cover Graphic



1.4 License

This entire PDF is licensed together under a Creative Commons Attribution-No Derivative Works 3.0 United States License as a whole, and nothing is to be separated, added on to, or modified in any manner.

Clarification on what no derivatives means:

No changes may be made in any way including but not limited to:

the material content and design must be copied as a whole (everything contained in this pdf file)

- with nothing added
- without anything taken away

must be kept in its original form with no additions or subtractions to

- file formats
- HTML and CSS code
- PDF files
- graphics and movies
- sounds, music, and spoken word
- interactivity and flash
- file and directory structure
- filenames and directory names
- links
- distribution method

1.5 Introduction

This collection, Complete Ideological Discoveries, contains most of my writings on the topics of philosophy and religion, including: my intellectual discoveries, my world-view and message, how to learn values, and general information on philosophy and theology that are commonly misunderstood. This book contains Theoretical Breakthroughs and the Book of Belief.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Breakthroughs

by Ben Huot

2.1 Intellectual Breakthroughs

2.1.1 Philosophical Positions

Hermeneutic (Method of Interpretation)

- I use primary sources to derive theology or philosophy for a particular belief system
- I focus on what I see as the pure or original interpretation of the philosophy or theology
- I do not research current or past deviations of each major belief system

Practice and Bible Derived Reasoning

General Methods

- My method of ethical reasoning is derived from practical considerations.
- My method of theological reasoning comes from Biblical considerations.
- My method brings these perspectives to their logical conclusions.
- My theory is based on what the Bible says about theology and what helps influence a person do the right thing.
- I back track the way people should act according to the Bible and what the Bible says about God into a theory that is most consistent with these outcomes.

Applications according to Theory

- My theology, Towards a Philosophy of the Bible, mirrors what the Bible says about God and a solution to suffering that best answers this problem.

- My ethics, Still Theory, are based on a combination of the philosophies most consistent with the Bible and having the least major ethical dilemmas and answers postmodern questions about suffering and uncertainty.
- My psychology, Liberation Psychology/Theology, enables the person to be their own advocate and focuses on religion as a secondary approach to solving lingering problems with Schizophrenia, as the most effective practice is to take the medication.
- My aesthetics, Bible Model Aesthetics, works to solve practical issues like accessibility, morality, and quality from a Biblical perspective.
- My sociology/biology, Community through the Humanities, focuses on finding harmony with the groups of people we come into contact with in real world situations and applying ethics from Still Theory.
- My theory of education, Learning of the Heart, is based on the realities of life and how people can know what is right and wrong.

Contrasting Theories of Education

Learning of the Mind

- The establishment assumes that public education through high school prepares a person for the world
- The establishment assumes that everyone should be educated in the same manner
- The establishment assumes that they know best what the public needs to learn
- The establishment assumes that what they believe is right and wrong should be imposed on everyone else
- The establishment assumes that public education improves people's social status and morality

- The establishment assumes that with slight modifications, they will get radically different societies

Learning of the Heart

I believe that being prepared for the world is a combination of different things, which the public school system fails at all of them, including:

- understand how the establishment works, how to use it to improve one's life, and avoid it changing the individual or placing more limits than normal on the individual
- develop critical thinking skills and determine what is right and wrong by conscience
- develop a useful skill for financial support and independence
- I believe that different people should be taught different things
- I believe that people know what is right and wrong at birth
- I believe that the world's idea of right and wrong is contrary to God's
- I believe that people's social status is determined by who they know and what status their parents have and their morality is determined by personal choice
- I believe that in order to radically change society, we must make major changes

Unified Social Theory of Natural Science

- All creatures that feel pain should be kept from any unnecessary suffering
- The difference between humans and animals is a matter of degree
- Human beings are not defined by any distinct characteristics in the Bible

- The distinguishing factor between people and animals is a social construct
- People have social and physical power over animals and are responsible for their well being
- Flora should be treated with respect to their well being as well as fauna
- Water and cells should be carefully looked after as they are the building blocks of life
- The earth should be treated with the same respect as other life forms
- Preservation of life does not mean no harm is done
- Although animals and people may be perceived as the same, the human has a responsibility to look after the animal
- Not subjecting sentient beings to physical pain is just the beginning of a social ethic
- Humans should use their resources to actively advocate for the well being of all sentient beings

2.1.2 College Education

Conservative Curriculum

Some study to learn
What others have dreamed of
Some study to learn
What is popular
Some study to learn
The values of the past
Some study to learn
The traditions of their ancestors
Some study to learn
What they already believe
Some study to learn
What is well understood
Some study to learn

To be respected by others
Some study to learn
The path well traveled
Some study to learn
From a specific ideology
Some study to learn
From what others tell them
Some study to learn
To be opinion leaders
Some study to learn
To memorize information
Some study to learn
Rules others have made
Some study to learn
What is practical
Some study to learn
What is widely accepted
Some study to learn
What isn't controversial
Some study to learn
Without questioning

Liberal Arts

There are few colleges
Where you can create
Your own major
There are few colleges
That encourage you to think
There are few colleges
That care about
More than reputation
There are few colleges
That don't bend over backwards
For a few dollars in grants
There are few colleges
Who dare to have a vision
There are few colleges
Who don't depend on sports
For getting funding
And recruiting students

There are few colleges
Who are not indebted to
Government and big business
There are few colleges
Who control their own curriculum
There are few colleges
That challenge the status quo
There are few colleges
That prepare students
For unpredicted changes
In the future of society
There are few colleges
That take pride in
Creating controversy
On campus
There are few colleges
That spend as much
On human development
Than on Scientific research

College Football

America is a society
Oriented around sports
We believe that competition
Brings positive change
We believe that physical fitness
Is more important than education
We believe that winning
Is the most important method for change
We are aggressive in business and politics
We are not interested in the community
The leaders only care about
Their own status and wealth
Our young all believe
That they will play
American football for money
They either want to get money
For being famous
Or get a welfare check
Our athletes make millions of dollars

For running a ball across a line
The players feel tough
Because they run into each other
We think that being a man
Means memorizing sports statistics
We spend most our time
Talking about what teams win
And about our football team
We played on in high school
We believe that we peaked in college
And that the only thing important
Is whose team won the game

Lost Opportunities

How will we compete
When every one
Has a college degree?
Will we have to get doctorates
For a family wage job?
How are we to pay
For our education
When our families
Are too rich
To receive aid
But too poor
To afford to help?
Will anyones be rewarded
For a liberal arts degree?
The only degrees that pay
Are business and engineering
Is that what
We want to base
Our future on
Technology alone
With no room
For the arts or religion?
We only care about
What is the quickest way
To build things
Bigger, better, and faster

We have no culture
And no reason to create
We have no imagination
Or reason to live
Other than for
Getting drunk after work
Or losing ourselves
In virtual worlds
We are afraid
To confront reality
And solve real problems
We are told
The problems are too complex
And we need
To solve problems
Through politics and business
We don't have the creativity
Or the time and energy
To pursue positive change

2.1.3 Philosophy of Religion

Theology includes Philosophy

Everyone has a perspective
Everyone has opinions
There is nothing theological
That is not influenced by philosophy
We do not live in a vacuum
And ideas come from somewhere
There are no new philosophies
Just restatements done with less eloquence
There is no way to only study the Bible
We are only fooling ourselves
And no one else
We cannot distance ourselves
From our own foolishness
We are corrupt to the core
It is not possible to read the Bible
Without prejudice and without feelings
The Bible is not meant to be

A list of rules or a systematic theology
Don't you think there is a reason
That there are so many views on
Every branch of theology?
The Bible is not meant to be interpreted
The same by the entire church
The Bible is not about a set theology
No one will ever uncover
The full philosophy of the Bible
The greatest theologians
Have only scratched the surface
And were wrong more times
Than they were right
Verses don't mean just one thing
The Bible should not
Be read in any set order
Verses should not stand alone
There are no hidden meanings
But few meanings have been found
There is more to a single phrase
Than can be understood
By the human mind in all eternity
And the Bible is only one small part
Of who God is
To say we were only influenced by the Bible
Or that we believe what the Bible says
Does not adequately explain our beliefs
We have presuppositions and experiences
But these aren't necessarily stumbling blocks
Feelings are great and mental exercises are of
use
But we need to reflect on our background
Or we will be repeating the mistakes
Of even the greatest of theologians
It is ok to not be right on even the main points
To disagree creates a healthy diversity
The church does not need core beliefs
Our doctrines only hold us back
There is more to life than theology
And there is more to the Bible
Than your statements of faith

Honesty

When you make claims
Which you use Scripture
To support your position
It is not honest
When you don't state
Your intentions up front
And explain your background
We are not merely spiritual beings
We are not just vessels
Of God's will
We have our own
Hopes, desires, and dreams
We are not pure spirits
With empty minds
There is a psychology
To religious beliefs
Ideas don't come
Out of a vacuum
We cannot wall ourselves
Off from unbelievers
We cannot understand
Our culture expect by
Reading books
Besides the Bible
Our minds are sponges
And we absorb ideas
From places we are
Often unaware
This is the use of
The study of philosophy
We get impressions
From many venues
We just assume
They are all from the Bible
Just because we are Christians
What we come up with
Is not independent
Of our culture and history
Ideas influence us

In subtle and surprising ways
We do not need to read a book
To be influenced by capitalism
Or to evaluate atheism
We are part of a larger
Ecosystem of dialogue
Great thinkers build
On what others have said
Christian and otherwise
Great theologians study philosophy
Some of the greatest philosophers
Were trained as theologians first
The early church adopted
Many ideas from Greek paganism
There is no way to be purely Christian
Without affection and sympathies

Freedom of Choice

Scripture is not meant
To be understood intellectually
Nor by our feelings alone
Although Scripture ministers
To all areas of our person
We should keep our focus
On the heart and the will
It is good to have diversity
Especially in opinion and perspective
The Bible is not meant
To be interpreted in just one way
We don't need an entire denomination
To be in agreement on any doctrine
Don't you think there is a reason
Why no one can agree
Or that theologians were interested
In such different topics
Throughout divergent eras?
The more widespread the views
The harder it is to see a pattern
God deliberately designed the Bible
To be poetic instead of legalistic

God could have just written
A list of rules and left it at that
We could just turn off our brains entirely
But that is not God's nature
He wants us to make rational decisions
And for different people
To go into different directions
And to see the Bible from different views
We have to realize that God speaks
To our entire person
That God is spirit and flesh
Christianity is not meant to be an organization
Or to have a rigid structure
Even the Bible explains salvation
Differently every time
All believers will enter Heaven by grace
But each will do it in a different way

2.1.4 Striking Back

What is Rational?

What is the definition of rational?
Believing that man is the highest good
Or that his intellect can grasp everything
Do you think you can disprove God
By quoting a famous atheist?
You win an argument
But just show your own limitations
And your own weak intellect
Not everything is meant to be
Analyzed in the Scientific method
What cannot be disproved
Is greater than that which can be proven
Guess and check can only go so far
And scientists are as bigoted
And resistant to change and new ideas
Than as are any other bureaucrats
The ideas of Science may have
At one time been an area for non-conformists
But it is no longer

Everyone believes in Science
And that is a great weakness
The masses can be convinced of anything
Scientists fail to realize
That it was their community that
Made a fool of Galileo
The first scientist was a smart ass
When your belief system
Can only understand matter-energy
Aren't you smart enough
To realize that it cannot explain
Anything important
It is not wrong to have a theory
To explain something
But when you use it as an excuse
To hide from spiritual realities
Who is the greater fool?
It doesn't matter how good you are at debate
Or how many facts you have on your side
Some things just don't make sense
Just because the entire Scientific establishment
Believes in one thing, the masses think it is
true
No matter how many times
Society confuses facts with truth
The number of believers is growing worldwide
It is interesting that those who think
They are so enlightened
As to be better informed than God
And think that they are the enemy of the es-
tablishment
That their ideas resonate best with
The people who create the problems
They are trying to fix
If the same system that said the world is flat
Now even admits they cannot observe
95% of the mass of the universe
Why should I believe them about evolution?
For a community that shuns innovators
And anything unusual or different
And is mainly motivated by prestige

Why would I believe anything
They print in numbers
And collect evidence for?
If scientists would study other philosophies
They would start to realize that the world
Is much bigger than Science
And that the real problems in life
Are not going to be solved by more technology
That we are never going to resolve
The true cause of suffering through education
That the innovation that will bring solutions
Is something that was written down 2,000 years
ago
That the most unusual ideas were some of the
oldest
That we are just re-inventing what China
Designed thousands of years ago
Without the Scientific method
If the Chinese were not smart enough
To keep the empire going
How are we going to be able to survive
A few more generations of Science?
One of the big problems with Science
Is it has no ethical foundation
Just as you cannot add security onto technology
Not designed with a firm foundation
Ethics are not just an add on
People do not become ethical by
Attending a one semester course
Or even after earning a Ph.D. in philosophy
It is not that we do not know enough
To do find a solution to our problems
But that we need a way to stop
Ourselves from creating more problems
Self control is the key to our survival
But the solution is not an invention
But supernatural intervention

Where Blame is Due

If Christianity is to blame for everything

People claim it is
Then why is there so much more evil
Done by countries which are primarily atheist?
Before jumping on the bandwagon
And blaming every problem on Christianity
People should actually read what the Bible
 says
The Bible never says it is ok to mistreat ani-
 mals
Augustine and Thomas Aquinas hated animals
But their theology is based more on Greek pa-
 ganism
Than it is on any possible interpretation
Of the Bible come up with by the biggest idiot
The Bible holds humans responsible for taking
 care
Of the entire ecosystem
Not only are we responsible for what we have
 done
But we must correct any problems no matter
How they were caused
Unlike what the religious wrong say
The Bible states very clearly in several places
That there is no distinction between man and
 woman
Or peoples of any race or any other background
Contrary to popular belief, the Bible noes not
 say
That corporations should control the govern-
 ment
Or that the wealthy got that way because
They were following God's laws
The Bible says over and over and gives many
 examples
Of moral people who loved God and suffered
 terribly
Many times exactly because of it
Contrary to popular belief, claiming to be born
 again
Does not get you to Heaven according to the
 Bible

You have to humble yourself before God
And believe you are equal to your fellow man
Before you can be saved
According to the Bible, environmental destruction
And stealing from people's retirements are sins
And are greater than that of committing adultery one time
Unlike what many people think
The Bible does not tell you everything to do
And is designed for there to be different interpretations
Of many ideas in theology
Similar to Taoism, the theology of the Bible is no-dualistic
Even though many Christians treat Paul's letters
Like analytical arguments, they are really mystical
Unlike what many Christians believe
The Bible encourages study of other religions and
Being intellectual by Paul's example alone
The religious ideas the Bible disparages come from
Occult religions like Greek Paganism
Which has been synchronized with Christianity
By Augustine and Thomas Aquinas

God and Country

The religious wrong have long believed
That America was a Christian nation
What America really was and this includes
The religious wrong
Is founded on the idea of
Not wanting to pay taxes
The founding fathers were anarchists
So to follow in their foot steps
Would be to overthrow the current government
The United States has always been

An aggressive and violent nation
Something we inherited from the English
We thought we were better than
The rest of the world
It was our duty to spread our power
No matter what the cost
Following in the footsteps of the English
We held people as slaves even though
We claimed to be a democracy
We used biological weapons on the
Native Americans and dishonored treaties
These are not things a Christian nation would
do
They do not honor God
And they do not promote human dignity
Now the religious wrong want us to protect
Humans that are not even born
But thinks it is ok to torture baby animals
In their use for food and experiments
Both of which are unnecessary
They believe that monopolies/dictatorships are
good
And that our bill of rights is unimportant
They are against giving to charities
They instead want to tax the poor
And give it to the rich to make bigger weapons
with
They are using a couple of attacks worldwide
As an excuse to invade another nation
When it had no intention of attacking anyone
So our dictator could settle an old score
The American House of Bush
Loves to redefine worlds until they have no
meaning
They have over written every law against pol-
lution
So a couple rich white men can get even richer
He has held teachers responsible for how
Prepared the kids are for school without
Factoring in different socioeconomic conditions
Which will ultimately destroy the school sys-

tem
After doing all this our dictator has the audacity
To claim he is a born again Christian
There is absolutely nothing Christian
About the way this creep acts

Medieval Morality

Enlightenment writers love to denigrate
The European Medieval period
By referring to it as the Dark Ages
Because they hated God so much
And they were enamored by material wealth
And advanced technology used in warfare
They blamed all their problems on God
Modern authors refer to the time
As being backwards and violent
What they really hate is that it was
A relative time of material poverty for Europe
After the fall of the Roman Empire
The entirety of Europe struggled to survive
But people don't see the bright side
Without the wealth to destroy others
And depending on the harvest for their food
People began to rely upon God
And had respect for God and nature
People still had evil in their hearts
But the scale of destruction was
Exponentially less than in "enlightened times"
In fact, although historians love to blame
Christianity for the big wars of the next 500
years
The Church was losing more and more power
As things began to be more and more violent
People saw Science as a way they could
One up God and avoid those inconvenient
Sexual and financial morals
See the main problem with Science is
That it has no formal ethics as part
Of its system of discovery

The superiority of philosophy
Is that it has an ethics
The superiority of religion
Is that it also has a reason
The superiority of Christianity
Is that it also gives a way

A Matter of Faith

Many people believe
That evolution should be
Accepted because
Most scientists believe it
They say it should just be
A matter of evidence
I believe it as a matter of faith
First of all, Science did not
Just arrive out of nowhere
And was not always
The way everything was decided
Neither are we more advanced
For relying on it for everything
Science was invented and came out
Of a particular western philosophical
School called the Enlightenment
Contrary to popular belief
Most technologies of the modern world
Were not invented by Europeans or
By their precious Science
They were dreamed up and produced
First by the Chinese
In fact, the Industrial Revolution
Came about from our discovery
Of Chinese technologies
Invented hundreds or even thousands
Of years earlier
There are many other methods
Of discovery and verification
Jainism has a number all by itself
The five senses, testimony, ESP,
telepathy, and an all knowing ascended being

Mystics have a number as well
Faith, intuition, and prophetic visions
Most schools of Hinduism
Verify knowledge by
Perception, inference, comparison, and testi-
monies
So we see that Science is only
One school out of many
In the panorama of philosophy
Even if I would be convinced
If provided the evidence
In the Scientific form
It would not be possible
For me to accept evolution
Except by blind faith
Because it requires a Ph.D.
In Science to have the background
To make an informed position
Otherwise it is just oversimplified
And I have seen this done
In philosophy and religion
So I would only trust my own
Research into the theory of evolution

Circular Argument

Most people believe anything
Someone with a Scientific education says
How do they prove things?
By facts, of course
How have they proven
That facts are truth?
Because that is Scientific
Facts determine details about
Specific events and measurements
But how does one prove Love?
How does one disprove it?
Many people believe if there
Are no facts for proving something
Than it must not be true
But facts are less important

Than things determined by faith
Things determined by experience
Things determined by reflection
Things determined by immersion
In a particular field of work
Things determined by scripture
Things determined by miraculous
Answers to prayer
If there is nothing to prove
That facts are true
Other than a circular argument
Then why do we base our society
On this shaky ground
And why do we force
This viewpoint on young children?
Our world is getting worse and worse
The more we use facts
To determine policy and direction
Shouldn't we base our ideas
By what works and what doesn't
In the real world
With cold, hard truth
Not by just flimsy facts
After all, it's not like it's hard
To present lies as facts

Only One Answer

There are few things in life
That only have one answer
This is one of the things
People like so much about Science
But this a false premise
As Science is only one way
Of discovery
And is only applicable
To one way of thinking
Coming from the culture of
One part of the world
Having multiple answers
Is the great thing about art,

Philosophy, and religion
The humanities are the only
Fields that treat other cultures
With dignity and respect
They are the only ones
That explain what being
Sentient is like
They answer the most
Important questions
Better because they can
Have multiple answers
Most things in life are paradoxes
Which aren't very compatible
With Science and math
How can you reduce
Most fundamental problems
Down to one solution?
How can you explain
Feelings in numbers and attributes?
How do you express mystery
With a system that is designed
To explain everything?
Ever wonder why economists
Can't predict the future
With mathematical models
Or why it is so hard to
Communicate with psychologists?
Ever wonder why scientists
Are surprised when they
Discover animals are sentient
Or can have mental disorders?
We have an ancient heritage
Of wisdom and understanding
That is aware of things
Science can only dream of
To rely on a system that
Ignores questions of the spirit
Or things that cannot be tested
Under controlled conditions
To guide society into a better world
Shows that our world no longer

Values the truth and is only looking
For easy solutions and doesn't care
About how bad the consequences are

2.2 Social Breakthroughs

2.2.1 Religion

Philosophy of Life and Death

Many Christians see salvation as an end and not just a beginning. They absolve themselves of doing any help in the world, because they see the world as corrupt and take the easy answer of letting the world fall apart. They look knowingly at each other and think they are so much better, because they are saved.

This is based on the theology of saved by faith alone, but it is not consistent, even within its own system. If God saved us, because we repent of our sins, then why do we think we are better than others? We are all equally bad and God's criteria for reaching out to us is just that we humble ourselves before God and consider ourselves equal to unbelievers. If we can't even do that, how can we consider ourselves to be born again or followers of Christ?

If Christ, who is God Himself, did not even consider Himself equal to God and submitted Himself to the authority of men, then where do we get off thinking that we are better than unbelievers. Often, theologians compare Christ's descent to being human as equivalent to us descending to being a bug, but this is a gross exaggeration of our worth and gross simplification of God's glory above man. Christ being born as a human is more equivalent to use giving up our existence permanently.

God is not limited by any thing and He is so far above us that we amount to a grand total of zero in comparison to God. It is a miracle that any of us is actually saved and the effort is almost entirely on God's side. It is not that our submission to God means anything, but just a rightful understanding of our place in the universe; it is the grace of God that does the work.

It is important that we make a choice, to submit ourselves before God, but this is just the beginning of the path. Just because we can't get beyond grace, salvation, and faith, does not mean that we do not make the effort to grow. Just because the world is going to end soon is no reason to let everybody suffer, without attempting any way, to help reduce the suffering.

The majority of the Bible tells about how we should live our lives, while on earth. If we really want mass conversions to the Christianity of the Bible, we are going to have to show unbelievers that we truly value life.

For a person to choose a philosophy of death and to totally give up on improving the world is a defeatist mentality. How can we expect to have victory in Christ if it doesn't start by reaching out to our own communities in Christ reflected love?

Future World Religion Trends

By the year 2050, the term White Christian will be an oxymoron. If you take into account the actual faithfulness of people calling themselves Christian, the Christian world has already shifted to the Southern Hemisphere. In many of the countries throughout the world, they are not as honest at doing statistics as in the United States, where predominantly Muslim countries are going to severely undercount the number of Christians and the same will happen in the predominantly Hindu country of India.

Europe had not entirely converted to Christianity until the 14th century and there were more Christians in Asia than in Europe, until the years 1000. Most of the reduction of Christians in the Middle East happened in the late 19th and 20th century. The first big reduction of Christians in the Middle East came, after they supported the Mongol Empire. The conversion of non-Muslims to Islam was largely brought about by the missionary efforts of the Sufis. 10 percent of the populations of Egypt and Syria are still Christian. Islam is now experiencing a major fundamentalist revival and many more nations are going to be governed under Islamic law.

Many of the most populous African nations have a mixture of Christians and Muslims and there is not the same idea of separation between church and state in Africa than there is as in the West. When a predominantly Christian nation, with a large Muslim minority, declares itself to be a Christian nation or the exact opposite situation occurs, we are going to continue to have major wars in Africa. And now we have nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons on the open black market.

At the same time, Europe is going to have more and more immigrants from Africa, for there to be enough labor pool to keep Europe's economy going. America is going to continue to have a strong Christian minority, reinforced from a strong influx of Christian immigrants from all over the world, especially Latin America. The Pentecostal movement is very strong in Latin America. Europe and the United States are going to be dependent on oil for a long time and this will dramatically affect our alliances. We will continue to be afraid of angering the Muslim nations and will continue to bend over backwards, to keep our supply of oil coming.

Some of the biggest world religions by 2050 will be Pentecostalism, Catholicism and Islam, just counting in the population increase and not on any new converts. Buddhism, which not long ago had 20 percent of the population of Asia, now has shrunk to 5 percent, due to the spread of Communism in traditionally Buddhist countries. Whenever China allows more freedom of religion, it will not be surprising if we find out 10 percent of China is Christian already, even under extreme persecution.

The Christian South tends to be: much more conservative in sexual morality, supernaturally and community oriented, and by all evidence much more biblically based. The most popular book in the Bible in Christian Africa is Revelations. Much of this is due to cultural backgrounds of those in the Southern hemisphere, where: they are coming from animist religions and are in extreme poverty, they experience persecution regularly and have large refugee populations, all of which reinforce the relevance of the Biblical narrative of God's work with Israel, in the Law and in the Prophets.

The Case for Liberal Christianity

If we follow the example of the early Church, as recorded in Acts, we see the early Christians as members of a ideal collective community like an Ashram, Kibbutz, or Monastery. If we follow Jesus example, we would carry out the Gospel, while doing good works, especially in service of those rejected by society. Convincing people to be born again was originally linked with helping out those in need in practical situations. Christianity is inherently liberal in its social aspects.

Now we see famous people, like the American president claim that they are born again Christians, the word Christianity loses all meaning. Voting conservative counters all the money sent to help starving people in Africa. Conservatives (in other word, people following atheistic convictions) voting either Republican or the very similar Democrat, in the United States, just perpetuate the establishment, which is referred to in the Bible as the world and Christ told us to be no part of. In fact, Jesus was most critical of the equivalent of the Church establishment, which at that time was in the form of the Jewish establishment - these are the people referred to as the Pharisees and Saducees.

Although I believe that Christianity is socially liberal, I hold to what the Bible says on salvation and eternity. I see helping others out who are in need, as another note in the same song on the same instrument.

I believe that our American society is pluralistic and that holding people to Biblical standards who aren't born again doesn't make any sense, if you believe in eternal salvation and a literal interpretation of the miraculous of the Bible. The Bible is not about a set of rules, but about a relationship with God. According to Jesus, following the Ten Commandments alone not only doesn't get you to Heaven, but is impossible. And according to Paul, the only way we can keep from sin is by the direct divine intervention of our savior, Christ.

Not only is it non-sensical to expect people to follow the laws of the Bible, without becoming born again first, it actually goes against an orthodox interpretation of the

Bible. Furthermore, if I had the choice of living in an idealistic society with conservative "Christians" as leaders and live in a predominantly atheistic society, I would definitely choose the later. The only kind of Christian dominated society I would want to live under would be directly under the authority of Christ, in the flesh.

The thing on the mind of most conservatives to change about society is to persecute or severely limit the rights of people who are homosexual. Although I believe that homosexuality is a sin, I believe divorce is also, but I don't see many conservatives giving up sexual relations with their previously divorced spouse. And these are the same kinds of people with the same reasons for discriminating against people of color and women in previous generations.

Instead of targeting people, because I don't agree with their values, I seek to help those out who society has rejected. The most rejected by society are animals. Cute little furry animals are kept as prisoners and tortured, so that the chemical and meat industries can collect more cash from unsafe products. Their habitat is destroyed all over the world, in a senseless rush to use up all the world's potentially renewable resources in a couple generations. Also, prisoners are discriminated against. We often see them as the enemy in our society, but we all have sinned and are to forgive our neighbors. So we should help people who have made mistakes to get back a productive place in society and find a way to keep from getting sent back to jail.

2.2.2 Innocence Lost

I used to think that the common conception, that earlier decades of this century or earlier centuries were more innocent, was just nostalgia. But, as I now enjoy watching TV shows that I watched in my youth, I am reminded about how much simpler things were, even 15-20 years ago

Technology

One of the things that has really complicated life is the increased complexity in software, games, phones, mainly centered around the Internet.

I remember when I first used a computer, the main difference between using the computer for word processing rather than by hand or on a type writer was the ability to cut and paste. When you make the jump from producing for print, to producing for the web or email, the complexity increases at an exponential rate. Things like structured documents and file size matter much less, when you are not moving documents around primarily in an electronic format.

I think the problem is, that things are advancing so fast that we are not able to adjust our society, in a useful way. Criminals, people in the sex industry, and the military understand technology well and make good use of it. But for the average person, just understanding what the main features are, or even what the feature descriptions mean the software does is overwhelming, even for as simple a thing as a word processor, even for me.

I was reading about 2 things over the last several weeks, that sound like very useful technologies, one quite old and the other not even ready for use yet. One is Web 3.0 or the Semantic Web and the other is the RISC OS operating system.

The RISC OS is a operating system first made by the BBC and comes from the United Kingdom (also known as Great Britain). It is not well known anywhere, especially in the United States, but this system is easier to use and more suited to desktop publishing than the latest Mac. It is relatively expensive and is not compatible with many things, but it makes up for this in its well thought out design.

The Semantic Web is a way of getting computers to understand human language better, by making the information smarter. This means giving extra information for the computer, along with the writing designed to be read by humans. This is built on what is called an ontology, or system of knowledge, where the computer is shown how

words are related. This is a very simple level of complexity for the computer to handle, but should make things easier for us. For example, when you search for pizza, the computer doesn't understand that Italian food is related to pizza, so if you search for pizza places, it is not going to list the Italian restaurant.

This is a great idea, but the problem is who gets to decide which ontology to use. What if the ontology said that Jesus Christ is the same as Buddha or Allah?

As our jobs become more and more directly associated with computers, we socialize mainly with computers, and we get entertainment mainly with computers, the less culture we will have. Art created based on watching people type into computers is not a interesting subject for most artists. When I was a kid, if someone could use a computer on a TV show, they were a nerd and specialist and they were only used, as one of many skills. Now on TV shows, almost everyone uses a computer and the computer specialists know a tremendous level of background knowledge and skill, in almost every area of computers.

Human Relationships

Over the last 20 years, the family and other social interactions have changed rapidly and are quite different then they were even a few years ago.

When I was a kid, no one was talking about Gay rights or discrimination against homosexuals. I never thought of the idea of same-sex marriages. There were no actors playing gay main characters on any of the TV shows I watched. Now we have numerous shows where men even kiss on TV and everyone has an opinion on gay marriage.

International relations were different when I was younger. We didn't worry much about terrorism in America and Russia was our main enemy. Russia was falling apart and so we were entering a time of peace without there being any conceivable future threats. When the first Gulf War happened it was fought in a few days.

When I went to school, my parents supported the teachers and we followed the principals rules. Today, par-

ents can get the schools to do anything they want them to by threatening to sue. When I went to school, we didn't know of anyone who was an illegal immigrant. I did not know of anyone on paid school staff who did translating. When we learned about history, it was just about American history and a little history of England. When I went to school, we didn't have any after school programs. But we had numerous sports to choose from.

On sitcoms today, the relationships are totally different. We see the mothers as the leaders of the family, and the dads act like kids. The kids are seen as equal partners in decision making. The parents have the same amount of maturity as their kids. Sex is commonly talked about and the women don't want to get married any more than the men. Women are as interested in the way the guy looks, as the kind of job he has.

2.2.3 The Public Mind and American Democracy

Many young people are critical of America and then my parent's generation will say "it is the worst form of government, except for all others". American democracy works, but not for the reasons people think. Sure we are free to vote, but there are only 2 parties that have a chance of winning and they are almost identical.

Many young people get upset because they want real change and they believe that our democracy should allow them to make radical changes. Then, when they realize it is not possible: they stop voting, they get involved in violent protests and sabotage, they take out their frustrations with their cars, drink heavily or take drugs, or try to do various lobbying efforts.

The reality is that we are not ruled by a democracy but by a dictatorship, but instead of using violence to control people, the dictatorship uses the media to control our world-view. People say that is not true because we can say almost anything we want about the government and there are no censors. As long as it is not communicated to enough people in a way that will convince them, then the government doesn't care.

Controlling people's minds is the best way to control the government. People will put up with almost anything, as long as they think they are well enough off financially. People like to talk about freedom, but really all most people want to do is just follow orders. Most people don't care about doing what is right or wrong, as long as they are members of a large group that can tell them what to believe. It is not that the average person wants to cause problems for others, its just that they are unwilling to change anything about their lives to help.

They key for individuals, who want to do what is the right thing and not just what is comfortable, I would like to introduce: the concept of "no blood on my hands" where we work to limit the amount of destruction we cause to others and use creativity to go "under the radar" so that we are following all the laws, but we are at the same time freeing them from the media controlling our minds and we work to "free others" on a small scale.

"No blood on my hands" means limiting our impact on the environment and the poor. Many things fall under this, which is often called the voluntary simplicity movement. Some of the things I do are: use shampoo and detergent that are not tested on animals, I don't eat beef, I don't drink alcohol, I use open source software, and I give to help farm animals left to starve to death and to Christian ministries in prisons.

"Going under the radar" seems the easiest to do on the Internet. Be part of the long tail, where you appeal to a small segment of the market or a given specialty. You can effectively compete with the likes of Google, Yahoo, and Microsoft in concert with many other specialty sites, without any coordination necessary. You can subvert the media by licensing your work under a creative commons license.

"Freeing others" comes from sharing information that condemns consumerism and materialism. Instead of consuming the information that is produced for the masses, get your information from foreign books and international news from other countries. Another way to free others is to be positive and encourage others. Pray for them and find news of positive things going on in the world.

Most importantly, do not invent any technology that would upset the economy, even in a way that would help others. The government doesn't look to kindly on people figuring out how to produce energy for free or anything that fundamentally advances Science.

2.2.4 The Protestant Ethic

Have you ever wondered why so many Republicans are Evangelicals and why so many Evangelicals are Republicans? Because many are both interested in making money. But many are moral because they never spend it - that would be pagan. You too can get rich if you join our church. Our theologians have found the secret to creating wealth - having lots of money to start with.

Hard Work

My neighbor says
He wants a website
You do websites?
What is it for?
To sell things
I am not your man
I know how to write
How to design
How to think
How to create
How the technology works
I have 9 years of experience
And am hard working
I can do it for free
By I don't know how
To convince people
To buy something
It is a common misconception
That people are poor
Because they are lazy
In America we equate
Hard work with money
But their are millions

Who would beg to differ
Proverbs says we should
Work hard
But God never promises
To make us rich
Even if we follow
All His commandments
If godliness equated money
Or money was to be valued
Then Jesus would have been rich
Paul was poor and in prison
And he was happier then
Than any time of his life
Solomon was rich but depressed
When he had the wealth
Of the entire world
He wrote the most
Nihilistic book of the Bible

American Philosophy

You thought philosophy
Was the love of knowledge
But why does it matter
If it can't make you rich?
If working 40 hours a week
Gives you enough money
To live on
Then working 80 hours a week
Will give you money to invest
If you invest all that money
You will be rich
And then you can start
Your own business
So you can be a proprietor
Then you can sell
Your business
To make more money
Don't worry about
Studying the classics
It only matters

If you have money
The more money you have
The more you can make
The more time you spend
The more money you make
This is all you need to know
The rest is luck and marketing
What else is there to life?

Faith and Work

You are a technical writer
Your job is to write
About new technology
Your audience is affluent
You publish for your advertisers
You publish facts
But they seem to always
Be in favor of whoever
Pays you the most money
When you are discovered
You lash out angrily
With weakly worded insults
You get angry comments
You lose more readers
Do you think
You did something wrong?
Was that you at church
On Sunday
In the front row?
Was it you who ranted on
About those liberal rascals
In the church parking lot?
Do you think you were
Acting Christian?
What has that
Got to do with it?

Bad Monk

He wears a coarse robe

Of brown burlap
His head is shaved
And he is silent
He works in the fields
In the heat of the day
He picks oranges
Atop high ladders
And makes marmalade
The following morning
To give to the
Orphans and widows
To bring a smile
To their little faces
He kneels down
For the midnight prayers
This is how he spends
Most of his days
What a waste
He could be pulling
A 6 figure salary
As a professional gambler
If he would just
Jump the border
And steal someone's identity
No questions would be asked
He would only be taking
A job Americans
Are unwilling to do

Religion of Isolation

God loves me
And my family
He doesn't like you
He chose to save me
No matter what I do
I am one of the few
Who get to go
To Heaven
God didn't choose you
So you got to Hell

I cannot explain
Why God makes
Those decisions
But we have no right
To contest it
I don't have to care
That all my friends
And coworkers
Are unbelievers
I believe they
Have been specifically
Chosen to suffer
For all eternity
It is all set in stone
And it doesn't matter
How you or I act
You are one of those
Who haven't been chosen
I will not associate with you
Because I am better
We have exclusive clubs
And we make more money
Our kids will be
Your kids bosses
God has blessed us
For His reasons
We have enough members
We are not interested
In your salvation
We will try to punish you
By creating laws
That are based on our
Odd view of life
We think everyone
Should follow our beliefs
No matter if they believe
Or not

Worldly

The whole world

Is Going to Hell
Except the members
Of my church
If you don't believe
Just like us
In our warped
View of Scripture
There is no hope
For you
Those who are
Not among us
Die their hair
Bright colors
They paint their fingernails
All solid black
They have piercing
And they have tattoos
They read Harry Potter
And listen to
Liberal radio broadcasts
And non Christian music
They have parties
And watch movies
They watch TV
And use the Internet
They drink alcohol
Outside of communion
No on like that
Would dare come to
Our church

Who Can Help Themselves

God will only help you
If you can help yourself
You are only saved
If you are rich
God always blesses you
In a purely financial way
Christian charity
Means having a job

That pays lot of money
If you can do this
By your own skills
Then God will help you
God looks down on
Those who are lazy
Who we can determine
By those who make
Only a little money
Money follows grace
The point of following
All of God's commands
Is to get rich
If you weren't gaining anything
Then why would you
Go to all the effort
Of going to church
And raising money
To send your kids
To camp in the summer?

2.2.5 Capitalism and Atheism

Un American

Conservatives say that
It is un American
To challenge the power
Of multinational corporations
But how American
Are these companies?
They don't pay any taxes
To the American government
They don't employ US workers
They are invested in by
Unstable dictatorships
Countries in the Middle East
Their bank accounts are in
Offshore islands
Or Swiss banks

Democracy vs. Capitalism

Our enemy during the cold war
Was communism
And millions died for this cause
But what were we fighting for?
Democracy isn't the opposite of communism
Anymore than medicine
Is the opposite of sociology
How could people be against communism?
A more equitable distribution of wealth
Should fit in comfortably
In a country with a distribution of power
What we were really fighting was dictatorship
But we supported other dictators
The only thing that differentiated
Our "communist" enemies from
Our dictator friends
Was who would open their markets
Their raw materials and cheap labor
To multi-national corporations
To sap every drop of possible profit from
The reality is that no one has ever
Or would ever give up power willingly
The only reason why we can speak freely
In America is because our souls
Are bought and paid for in full
The only way the government would allow
Government that is voted in office
Is if they had absolute control over the media
We can say whatever we want in America
So long as no one hears it or doesn't act on it

Freedom and Terror

We are afraid of being attacked without warning
We lost 3,000 of our people
Those in the Middle East are tired of being victims
Of American violence

We have killed off hundreds of thousands of them
And we are fighting the wrong nation
It is just like how the police in America
Don't bother to solve crimes
But rather find the nearest person of color
To be a scapegoat to appease the grieving
Who is really a threat to who?
A few thousand poor people
With improvised weapons living in tents
Or the most wealthy nation in the world
Which has the capability to fight the entire
Rest of the world together and win
We spend more in a day on war
Than our entire annual budget for education
The president thinks it is a waste of money
To offer free medical care for the poor
But keeps on donating money to the rich
Who have drove their companies into the ground
We spend more on software
That we could get a better version for free
Than the annual salary of the person
Operating the computer
In a third world country
Our kids take drugs to escape from reality
And that finances the Middle Eastern terrorists
We invade their country but won't
Destroy the crops that it comes from
For fear of alienating ourselves from the locals
There is an easy solution
It is against the religious beliefs of those
Who are growing the drugs to continue with it
So all we need to do is guarantee them the
same money
From selling something that is not a drug
But our government is really afraid of
Alienating the multi-national corporations
That got the government elected

More than Bread

Man does not live on bread alone
What is best for man
Is not limited to what is best
For his taste-buds
And for his sensual enjoyment
A person has more needs
Than food clothing and shelter
Man needs a good relationship
With God with other people
And with the animals and plants
And his entire ecosystem
Which is primarily spiritual
What we see is not all there is
What we can sense is not eternal
Satisfying our feelings
And maintaining physical health
Is not the entire picture
People have hearts and souls
They need to help others
They need to give of themselves
This may not be a balanced accounting
In the realm of money
But the heart and the soul
Have needs as well
What the body craves can actually
Destroy the mind
What the mind craves can
Destroy the heart
We need to know there is more
To life than eating and sleeping
What we need to be satisfied
Is in the giving of ourselves
To our Heavenly Father first
In humility and reverence
And to those who are in need
Who are physically, emotionally, or spiritually
Hungry and malnourished
We need to sacrifice our own needs
So that we both may live better lives

It is bad to be a slave to work
But it is worse to be a slave to your belly
This is the problem
With solutions to problems
That are only economic
This is why communism and capitalism
Both fail at improving lives
Like treating medical problems
Without awareness of the patients minds
Does not guarantee good health
It does not matter how much money
You have or how protected you are
If you cannot make the lives
Of anyone else better
Than how can you call yourself human?
Even animals help other animals in need
Even plants provide for life
Giving of themselves
And returning the resources back
When they part with life
The point of a business is to make money
At least theoretically
And a corporation only has a responsibility
To its shareholders
There is nothing to be gained
By society as a whole
Even if the business advances technology
Or extends our lives
Because it is doing it at the cost
Of other people and animal's welfare
To live happy and fulfilling lives
We do not need cell phones
Or computer games
Having a more powerful military
Does not guarantee we will win wars
Having the best education system
Does not mean there will be no crime
Immunizing people against diseases
Does not guarantee a long life
Man does not live on bread alone

Conscience

Some people say we need
Objective standards to live by
So that we can all agree
On what is right and wrong
We make all these turns of logic
And people are then
Afraid to make choices
Or more likely turned off by
Ethics in particular
Or philosophy in general
We do not need to understand
The phenomenology of Hegel
To know what is right
Is it surprising that basic laws
Are similar across belief systems
And that people still find
The Bible is relevant to them?
Is it a wonder that atheists
Are much more likely
To be afraid of death?
There are absolutes
And this does not mean
That we can be objective
But rather that the Creator
Of the multi-verses
Actually exists
That we are responsible
For our own actions
Whether or not we claim
We didn't understand
Do businessman really
Believe if being honest
That killing off an entire species
Or leveling an entire forest
Or experimenting on animals
Or wiping out an entire civilization
Is not wrong?
People lie and rationalize
God doesn't

Logic and Religion

Why do we need rules?
Why can we just live
By doing what helps ourselves?
How do we define
What helps ourselves?
Is there no such thing as generosity?
Do we think that all our desires
Could be satisfied on our own?
Could we have a society
Where everyone did whatever
Gained him the most
And ignored the spiritual dimension?
Spiritual forces are at play
And are involved in every thought
And action we make
Denying that there is a God
Does not make it so
And getting rid of religion
Because some people abused it
Does not solve the real problem
The real problem is that
When we seek to satisfy
Our own desires
And do not keep our focus on God
And on those in need
Our desires escalate
First, we are fed with bread
Then, all we want is cake
Then all we want to have is a job
Then all we want is to be middle class
Then all we want is a car
Then all we want is a house
Then all we want is a wife
Then all we want is a family
But seeking all these
For the benefit of just yourself
Adds up to a very sad world
That no one would want to live in
Do you ever wonder what

Car companies would do
If wheel technology was patented?
How would we communicate
If the English language was copyrighted?
What if libraries were illegal?
How could people afford to do research?
What if we didn't have free education?
What if there were no scholarships?
The point is that even the universe
Did not come out of a vacuum
We are all interrelated to each other
And we all have had help
No one is a self made man
Businesses get more government money
Than those on welfare
We need to see to our whole
Community and its welfare
If we are to live in peace with each other

On Marx and Engels

Communism has failed
And yet it has never actually been tried
We associate freedom
With domination by monopolies
And morality with corruption
The whole world is oriented
Around how to make a few people
Even richer than they are now
The only developments we see
Are first applied to warfare
Or they receive no funds
We want to minimize our losses
But if they are not Americans
We don't care how many suffer
Even those who are our allies
Unless they are white
We are only limited in
The deployment of violence
By our fear of retaliation
But that is not great

In a world we dominate
In every sense of the word
We can afford to launch
Preventative wars against countries
Who are driven by morality
Just because we have no values
We think freedom is about money
And the only sin is enjoying sex
We think that people's behavior
In their bedrooms
Is more important than what
Others do in boardrooms
We think we are so different
Than our greatest enemies
But we really see life the same way
They only hate us because we are rich
And we only persecute them
Because we use different vocabulary
Giving money to those in need
Is considered corruption
And our only values
Are about saving money
Because their may be inefficiency
In the government running welfare
We get rid of it entirely
There is less and less of a middle class
And people only think they are
Because they keep changing
The meaning of the word
We are continuing to get poorer
More in spirit than money
But we keep on voting
For those who created our problems
The word liberal is so vilified
That the average American
Thinks the poor should be punished
We keep on taxing alcohol and tobacco
With no restraint
And no one speaks out for the poor
But even our poor
Are rich by the world's standards

But no one considers Africa
Or anywhere there isn't oil
We only treat those in the
Middle East as people
To the extent that we
Are addicted to oil
We know we are running out
But it is considered un-American
To use alternatives or to conserve
American values consumerism
Most our economy is based on spending
The only thing our government
Asks of us is to get ourselves into debt
For things we don't need
Or even care much about
The ideas of Marx and Engels
Are very much alive
Their solution would never work
But their statement of the problem
Is as relevant today as when
They first wrote it
The difference is that the proletariat
Is in the Third World
But anyone who isn't white
We really have no time for

Marxism is Defeated

We have long since defeated
What we call communism
And yet we still think it alive
And fear it alone
Basically we equate any idea
Of justice or peace
As a ruse to a dictatorship
The only people we trust
Are the cowards that send
Our children to war
And spend their time in office
Finding ways to make themselves richer
With no thought as to the consequences

We think that war means peace
And that evil is good
We claim to be a Christian nation
And yet our values
Are whatever makes the most money
We don't care if the corporations
Control the government
We call this democracy
And claim that is what we fight for
But the only people that win
Are those supplying the weapons
Our heads of state are capitalists
And the only thing that motivates them
Is the interests of those with
The most money
Because they never spend any of it
But on charities that get them more money
They are considered good and moral
We think that every rich man
Got his wealth by his work alone
And the only way God blesses us
Is by making us materially rich
Christ would be a liberal
And that makes Christians mad
Because that means they are in the wrong
They are too busy persecuting
Those who look Middle Eastern to them
Than to think about compassion or humility
They see Christ as a conqueror
Basically Rome is their God
They only pray to God
Because they think that will help them
Win more wars
Like a superstition they pick and choose
Obscure references and equate them
With invented meanings
They are right on every detail
Of every subtlety of cultural meaning
And yet miss the main ideas

2.2.6 What If?

What if the Chinese didn't close down their fleet of ships after Zheng He's expeditions in the Ming Dynasty (about 1433 AD) ?

The Chinese had the largest wooden ships ever built and more than any European power at that time - and may have sailed as far as the New World, but they could not afford to anymore with other projects and wars related to conflicts with Mongolia, as they didn't sail in order to make money.

Buddhists Missionaries

Coming off ships
Brimming with canons
Loaded with gold
And human slaves
Along the Swahili coast
We have a new religion
Coming to Africa
From the Chinese
Buddhism is spreading
Westward into the jungles
Of central Africa
Buddhism wasn't very popular
At first until we were
Allowed to keep
Our old religions
We said we were happy
With our own gods
And didn't need theirs
But they told us
If we didn't follow them
We would come back again
As a monkey
Or end up this life
In a crate headed for China
To work the rice fields
We were told how compassionate
This guy called Buddha was

We asked why they didn't
Feed the hungry locals
They said we had to give up
Everything and be a monk
Most of us signed up
As we had nothing
Until we found out
We had to beg for food
Buddhism didn't sound like
Much of an improvement
Buddhism sounded like
A religion for the wealthy
The Chinese government
Said they were just here
For trade and to make us
More civilized
We thought that meant
We would get rich
But it seemed the longer
The Chinese were here
The poorer we became
The continued to make
Improvements in infrastructure
So the Buddhists could
Spread their religion
We have trains all over Africa
They get our natural resources
On ships headed to China
Faster that way
We found out that most
Of the officials weren't Buddhists
And that Buddhism wasn't
Really Chinese anyway
We were told that Buddhists
Were pacifists
Although we saw many
Chinese soldiers who were Buddhist

European Backwaters

No one cares about Europe

Why would they?
They are few in number
And they don't have any money
The Buddhists were active here
But the Christians outlawed them
As heretics and put them in prison
They were not a European religion
There are no empires in Europe
And the countries are all really small
The whole land mass
Is smaller than China
They don't have anything of worth
To trade or to sell
They don't make good slaves
They look like ghosts
They are the color of death
And they are dressed in rags
They don't have any navies of any size
We could conquer them easily
But they have nothing worth taking
They believe in one God
And most can't read
They have no common language
We still are not sure
Whether to classify them
As humans or not
They have no culture like ours
The few people who can read
Spend most of their days praying
They are obsessed with their classics
Some stuff written down
1, 000-2,000 years ago
By a small empire called Rome
And an even smaller one called Greece

What if we found another world that worshipped Jesus and was much more technologically advanced than us?

Christian World

People from another world
Who look a lot like us
And can speak our languages
Appear in a museum
Of ancient artifacts
They tell us about their God
And His name is Jesus Christ
And they came to our world
As missionaries because
Their world is all Christian
They have been traveling
From world to world
For hundreds of years
To spread the Gospel
Through inventions of
Their own designs
They live in a world
That is a thousand years
More advanced than ours
They can also travel
Through time and space
They have never seen
A world as corrupt
And as evil as ours
That hasn't destroyed itself
They live communally
And they have no crime
Their society has lasted
For thousands of years
Without conflicts
They want to help us
But they say the problem
Is not that we haven't
Advanced in technology enough
But that we need to
Improve ourselves morally
They have no environmental problems
And have never had any in their history
They treat animals as equals

And eat entirely vegetarian
They have hundreds of billions of people
On their world
And they are self-sufficient energy wise
Even though they their technology
Uses a lot of energy
Because they limit their use

What if Jesus came today?

Contemporary Jesus

If Jesus came today
He would be homeless
And hang out with
Strippers and escorts
He would be at the clubs
And at the political rallies
With anarchists and goths
He would be the son
Of a computer programmer
Who worked in a small business
Based on open source
His mother would be
An artist or designer
He would listen to reggae
And be vegetarian
He would live in a
Community house
With all possessions
Held in common
He would hand out flyers
For environmental causes
He would hang out
At poetry readings
And at Internet cafes
He would be a member
Of His local
Linux Users Group
And would use only
Open Source software

He would have served in Iraq
And in the Peace Corps
He would have
Started a new religion
And criticized the political elite
He would start a reform
Of the religious wrong
He would be a liberal
And speak out against
The conservative powers
People would follow Him
But not be able to explain why
The news would not film Him
And people would
Make fun of His followers
Pastors would say that
He was a heretic
They would ban Him
From church on Sunday
And the police would
Call Him an agitator
Bush would call Him
A terrorist leader
And He would be
Imprisoned without trial
He would be interrogated
And released to a mental hospital
He would form His own band
And He would have a blog
Where He would write poetry
With millions of monthly visitors

What if stuffed toys ran the world?

Toy Society

Children are prized above all
They are the friends
Of the powerful elite
The president's dump truck
Is pushed by a toddler

And the famous actors
Sign the diapers of their fans
The toy entrepreneurs
Load up the toy boxes
In their factories
And the children
Drive around the boxes
In battery operated
And joystick controlled
All terrain vehicles
The children go to play
At the toy research centers
To see what toys
Are the most popular
And for quality control
They are played with
Under supervision
Of the toy managers
To make sure they
Are safe for play
Day care for the toys
Is provided by toddlers
And teams of seamstresses
Are trained to be
The top surgeons
Of the toy leaders
Each toy is treasured
For its entire life
The toy gets a new
Assigned kid to look after
When the previous kid
Begins to grow up
No toys are ever given
To animals to martyr
There is always
A loving home
For every toy
They will always be warm
And kept clean and dry
There are always activities
To keep the toys busy

They have a great Christmas party
Where they meet new kids
And a holiday parade
Where all the toy stars
Are dressed up and honored
There are award ceremonies
For the kid's favorite
Toys of the year
When the kids grow up
They are used as heaters

What if farm animals ran the world?

Farm Society

The cows roam free
All over the midwest
Milk, cheese, and ice cream
Are free for every child
No animals are in prison
And they all have
Their own barns
With heated blankets
And human employees
To clean away the cow pies
Half the nation's wealth
Is in grain, crackers, and alfalfa
The currency is sugar
And no one eats meat
The pigs are the police
And everyone caught
Eating an animal's flesh
Is sent across the border
The sheep clear the
Wildflowers and weeds
So the human workers
Can plant the corn and wheat
For their cow leaders
All the extra paper
From all the books
Not recorded in farm animal

Languages are recycled
With the help of the goats
There is plenty of power
To run the mills
From all the cow pies
Cows are assigned
To each residential block
To keep the grass cut
There is no more
Need for cars
Nothing too small
To carry a cow
Is licensed to drive
There are new uses
For all the SUVs
They are all powered
By sugar cane
Left over from cow deserts

2.3 Emotional Breakthroughs

2.3.1 Son of Strength

I have developed the idea of raising the bar, once I reach the level that was once my goal, for a higher goal and then on and on until I die. I think I reached rock bottom recently. I have developed the ability to understand philosophy despite having Schizophrenia and with it the near impossibility of understanding abstract thought.

Based on this insight, I surmised that I could do the same thing with my physical body. I would strengthen my will to the point that I could force my body to do what it couldn't physically much as Special Forces do. The problem is that in the Special Forces, when the training is done, that at some point the service member gets to rest. They don't tire out the service members to the point that they have no energy, before they drop them onto classified missions.

So for me to assume that I could will myself into mastering my body is a flawed assertion at best. But that

was very arrogant to assume that I could reach that level of intensity, without having even attempting that kind of training. Anyway, when I came back from my run, which I was able to push myself past more pain than I was able to do in any of my cross country running, I tasted blood in my lungs and at the point when I got back to my retirement center, one of the managers thought I was having a heart attack.

This showed me that I need to slow down and be aware that although I can dream of saving the world, I do not have the energy to.

In addition to never being able to feel fully rested no matter how much sleep I have had, I can't push past it with greater mental strength, as I don't even have the control over my mind as a normal person does.

What the Apostle Paul said in Romans is at the heart of (Christian) Existentialism. We cannot do what we want to. We are not strong enough mentally to reach our goals. We must leave saving the world to God and just help in small ways or else we will not survive long enough to see the fruits of our efforts.

I have finally realized that having Schizophrenia is not just a mental illness; it is a physical one as well. If your medicine is being effective on giving you some control of your thoughts, then you will have no energy to do anything.

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

I have recently arrived at the conclusion that the increased suffering of the world recently is the direct fault of Christians not following what God has called them to do, and in response to the fact and because I am in the wealthiest nation on the earth and because of my gifts of intelligence and creativity that I should be able to make a measurable dent in the amount of suffering that the sen-

tient beings of the earth must feel. But the problem is I don't have the strength to have the reach that I believe I should have.

Many of the problems of the world, if they are to be solved by people, need more resources than I have been given. I will just have to accept that there is some reason that God is allowing this to happen by conscious choice alone.

I have had to struggle with whether to say I believe that God raised Jesus from the dead and that he was both man and God or that that is a fact. I have recently come to understand that belief is stronger than facts. Similarly to how I said when we had to mark opinion as false and fact as true that opinions could be truths but facts are not consequential enough to be truths. So it shows more certainty to say that I believe in Heaven and Hell than to say flatly that there is a Heaven and Hell and that is the truth whether you agree with it or not you will go to one, because of course its true to the limits of my knowledge which is all I can guarantee by saying it is the truth, but to say I believe something to be true means that I haven't just proved it intellectually, but it is so true that I risk eternity on it.

2.3.2 Heaven and Earth

There is a rhythm that exists
Deep inside your spirit
When all you hear is breathing
And your mind is all alone
Thoughts take flight
And you see nothing
Returning the power to Heaven
And the ten thousand things
Follow your mind
Liberation is a subtlety
And freedom comes from control
The hierarchy reflects nature
And the order is transparent
Within an instant
Everything fades away

The mind is ruler
And the body follows
When the mind is empty
The body is fully alert
With each breath
Heaven takes more territory
And the Earth longs
For heaven's leadership
A unity exists
When Heaven is patriarch
And his rule is sage-like
And shows perspective
The Way leads to your heart
And is illuminated by your breath
Heaven leads the Way
And each member settles in
For a long peace
And a stable rule
The Way is narrow
When your mind is a casualty of war
It broadens
As Heaven is seated on your throne

2.3.3 The Breakthrough

History

In Elementary School, I was so bored, as the classes were so stupefied and repetitious, that I daydreamed most of the time. Middle School was a dark time for me, as I had a very painful time getting rid of some huge warts. I also struggled with people kicking and hitting me, especially on the bus and in shop class.

High school was a renaissance for me, as I had always looked forward, to being in clubs. By my junior year, I was involved in Cheerleading, Boy Scouts, Summer Camp Counselor, Explorer Scouts, Catering, French Club, Model United Nations, Speech Team, a Political Club I started, a multimedia CD-ROM project with Sony, Future Business Leaders of America, a student journal, and a number of other ones I cannot remember. Other years I did Cross

Country and Long Distance Track, instead of Cheerleading. I put as much work into each of these, as I was able to, with the most time spent on: the Political Club I started, Cheerleading, Speech Team, and Boy Scouts.

At the end of my junior year, I signed up for the military, under the delayed entry program, so that I shipped, off for Basic Training a month, after I graduated from High School. I spent the whole year getting into shape for the Army and reduced my load of activities down to the seven I enjoyed most. Some of the reasons for joining the military were: serving my country, money for college, getting a break from school, and getting experiences for my resume. The military was harder than anything I had done before and I proved that anyone could do it, if they put in as much effort, as I did.

When I left the military, due to mental illness, I went into school right away, but I began writing some poetry, about a year through, and was inspired by learning about Postmodernism in an English Writing class, Chinese philosophy ,in my year long Chinese literature course, and Existentialism and Ecofeminism in some summer courses. I started out with a Business major, but later switched to Journalism, as I hated business so much and was not very good at it. I was always good at writing and so Journalism was a much better match.

Then on December 11th 1999, I was voluntarily admitted to the psychiatric ward of the local private hospital. I did not write for several months afterwards because I couldn't. I didn't know if I could write or understand philosophy again, but I continued to pursue it for a number of months and when I switched to a newer medicine I began to be able to write well again and understand philosophy.

Background

I have studied philosophy, religion, and literature, both European and Asian for 9 years, to help give myself a multicultural understanding of the Bible. I believe that theological traditions, in American culture, have kept us, from understanding what the Bible is really about. What

is really misunderstood is who the Holy Spirit is and how God's Spirit works, in the world, and in our hearts.

The passages, that deal with the Holy Spirit, are some of the most cited and the most unread of the Bible. The Holy Spirit spoke through David, in the Psalms, and through God's prophets, as well as in Paul's letters. I have developed a philosophy that combines Philosophical Taoism and Christian Existentialism, to help people understand God in a new way that originally comes from Scripture itself. This philosophy is meant to help seekers understand biblically based Christianity better and this also serves as an inspiration for Christianity, starting several hundred years from now.

But, I have pursued this as much, as I have the ability to and I will need to rely on God, to keep this around as long as it is His will to do so. For most people, their problem is ignoring what God is telling them, but my problem is that I take too much of it on myself. I have to realize, that God can do any of the work, that needs to be done that I cannot complete. This is not an excuse, to neglect God's voice, and fail to do the work He has prepared for us, but there is a balance in God's expectations and I have fallen on the side, of being a workaholic.

And the search for rest and my struggle with doing too much is an important theme in the philosophy. My understanding of Chinese philosophy is based on my upbringing as a Confucian scholar, which in western terms would be considered a workaholic. Ironically, Existentialism and Taoism have a lot to do with rest and enjoyment of life, but the paradox is that the father of Existentialism, Kierkegaard, worked himself to death.

I have recently had the opportunity to see a number of contemporary Chinese philosophy influenced works of art, in a museum near where I live, and the common theme is the magnitude of work and the precision involved in creating it. When I compare European art, to Asian art, I laugh, because it is so simplistic. But I have also seen the freedom in western art especially the Impressionists and in the work of Picasso.

I have constantly been fighting, to save the world, since my departure from the military, but I have finally

realized, that it is ok to rest and that my work is finished.

Questions

It is commonly thought, that if you believe in the Bible, it answers all your questions, so you don't have to think. You often hear people, who call themselves Christians, say they believe in all these absolutes and that they have life all figured out. This is totally wrong. While the Bible does give assurance of salvation, provided you repent of your sins and believe in Jesus' resurrection, there is not much else the Bible gives specific answers to.

Once you get past a couple of basic theological ideas about God, man, and their relationship, the more you look through the Bible, the more you will be surprised, at the implications of scripture. Did you know that Scripture never says, that we can't travel through time or different dimensions? Did you know that the Scriptures describe something, that sounds a lot like a UFO? Did you know that the Bible doesn't even refer to those, who can be saved, as human beings and that the Bible never says, that there aren't aliens? In fact, the more bizarre Science gets, the more the Bible lines up, with these new theories.

It is commonly thought, that only atheists are skeptics and that uncertainty is not a Biblical theme. The truth is that there are very few absolutes, in the Bible. The Bible is also very Asian, in its content. Most of the Bible is poetry and one of the main unifying themes, of the Bible, is suffering. The Bible speaks against the occult and even Greek philosophy, but not Eastern Philosophy or Christian mysticism.

Christians, who are honest, have to admit, that they constantly struggle with sins, doubts about promises in the Bible and various psychological issues, like addictions and depression. The Bible doesn't say, that all suffering comes from sin. In fact, King David suffered from depression and paranoia and he was filled with the Holy Spirit. Although the Bible helps us recognize, that there is a spiritual component to most issues, it leaves open the idea, that we can have psychological conditions, as well as physical ailments, that aren't necessarily the result of sin.

The Letter

I had a great break through last night.

I realized that I constantly looked for ways to improve my philosophy and my website in my mind and I have come, to the conclusion, that there is nothing more I can do, with the philosophy. I have just started telling myself, that I do not need to solve all the world's problems, by myself.

I have to wait on God, to solve the world's problems, in His time. I have gone as far as I can, in this direction. I have realized, that God doesn't require us to do some gigantic special project, and we are only responsible, for ourselves.

Just because other people have no vision and are not bright enough, to think of anything other than sports, does not mean what I have done is of no value. There is no reason why most people need to understand what I have done. I don't need to constantly improve myself.

It is OK, to just enjoy life. If people don't share my interests or values, maybe it is their problem and not mine. People being rude to me, or not liking me is not always my problem. I don't always need to be the one to change.

I do not need to be able to answer everyone's problems, that keep them from salvation. I am only responsible, for myself, and keeping the right attitude, before God.

More Thoughts

I don't have to always be learning new things. I don't always have to do everything, for a reason. I don't always have to make ten backups, of everything I create. I don't have to publish everything I do. I don't have to worry about all the possible bad things people could use, what I have created, to do.

I don't have to constantly get more talented, at everything. I don't have to master every discipline. I don't have to complete everything, as soon as I think of it. If something is that important, it will come back to me later.

In Verse

My mind runs endlessly
At the speed of thought
There are no breaks
To watch TV
There is no excuse
To stop working
When you believe
You can save the world
How can you end
Your essential project
When you believe
Everyday is your last
You push harder
And you never stop
When your expectations
Are endless
And always rising
You will never finish
You will never be satisfied
Until you are at the end
Of what you can handle
I stopped yesterday
I cannot continue
I need to wait
On God to save us
Continued improvement
Is not necessary
I am not always wrong
Its not always my fault
When someone doesn't like me
When someone can't relate
I am not responsible
For anyone but myself

2.4 Nature of God

Breakthroughs in my understanding of the nature of God.

2.4.1 Jesus Poetry

The One

The words jump out at you
They dance on the page
A steady light to pierce through the mist and
 shadows
A light that gravity cannot bend
A power that surpasses that of the undead
Like a quark compared to a strand of DNA
A book of the highest magic
A chill like that of a winter storm
As soothing as a glass of tea for a sore throat
A written record that proves history as we know
 it is a lie
Balrogs and Orcs ambush us at every turn
The road goes ever on and on
He stands taller than an Elven King
With strength greater than that of a ring
The battle is fought even in the Shire
Little Hobbits pass by without notice
The evil within is greater than that of the Dark
 Lord
We must struggle each year with the pain of
 our youth
Stepping out on the first day of the Fellowship
Knowing terror lurks under every darkened
 forest
But that One older than the forest is singing
 merrily
And in the havens the Immortals sing songs
 higher than we can sing

We are inseparable with the One even when at
 the farthest reaches of the universe
Our brothers and sisters move in concert with
 our every twitch
The words spoken by the Hebrew prophets
 thousands of years ago
Are a postmodern deconstruction of our present
 situation

What broke the symmetry of the emptiness?
Is it the same force that has slowed down the
explosion of new life forms?
That disharmony increases with every day
That we fly apart faster every second

The Majestic Down to Earth

A comet down to a meteor pebble
A red giant star to a black hole
The One now just a grain of sand in a mile
long stretch of beach
The One now a snowflake in a winter snow-
storm
How much greater was His descent to earth?
With the authority to bend the laws of physics
and chemistry
With the ability to create life out of nothing
The eternal now confines Himself to a human
life span
That which all creation cannot contain is born
a helpless child
His head turned down in respect for others
His eyes wide so that He does not harm any-
thing
His feet dirty because He does not think of
himself
His hands calloused from His devotion to his
family business in His youth
His understanding is brilliant as diamonds
His words are as clear as glass
His insight is like polished bronze
He delicacy in speech is like that of a potter
We are weighed down with worry about how
those who hate us will retaliate
The government is turning on those who are
trying to save us
Our time is spent working for multinational
corporations dreams
Our investments are lost because they were
based on deceitful schemes

His message is for our time
Humility and compassion are the keys to restoring our lives

Jesus

Is the universe in constant struggle
Between good and evil?
Does not nature possess more order?
Do we not have breaks between calamities?
Do basic structures break down
Most of the time or infrequently?
Both merciful and just
All-powerful and humble
All-wise yet foolish by our standards
A joke more serious than a tragedy
Is He both opposites at once
Or merely a mixture of equal parts
He is everything
He is my whole world
Yet He is not contained by His creation
Is He merely first order infinity?
Greater than someone could write down
Powers of infinity in an infinite time period
If He were just a Greek god
Or the heavenly ruler of China
He would not even bow Himself down
To visit earth
But He is infinitely greater than everything He
could create in all of eternity
Stretching in an infinite number of dimensions
if He never ceased
God does not struggle against evil
He beat all the powers of evil that ever will be
or have been
With just a sentence
God is God enough to live as a man
Secure enough in His holiness to save all of
mankind in a single night
Not afraid to descend into the pit of Hell
And powerful enough to rebuke the Devil him-

self, in His own name
When we look to God
To shuffle blame to Someone we don't think
 will respond
We have to calm ourselves and be rational
God is not a man and does not make mistakes
Our problems are caused by our own bad choices
And the bad choices of others
But He already has answered our prayer
He has shortened the time of the tribulation
And as we pray more and more
It comes nearer and nearer
So we won't have it hanging over our grand
 children's heads

2.4.2 Self Poetry

With one material, many souls

What is our true self?
What is our true identity?
Are we one with God
Is God in us or is He our true identity?
Is the individual soul an illusion?
Do we only exist as One?
Truly there is something
That unites the universe
Not only is there something
That unites body and mind
But also the same thing
Is the foundation of everything
And there is something else
The same moral purpose in everything
But we also have a soul that exists
And although it may be made of the same
As that of matter and energy and of other souls
The composition is unique
In each one of us
Just as each snowflake is made of the same
 molecule
There are ten thousand different kinds

Each one is an individual creation
With its own shape, size, and texture
So does our soul have a unique identity
And we have our own special characteristics
So we can share a common God
And we can empathize with each other
We can understand what it is to be human
And have the same desire to know our Creator
But we each have our own will
And we are directed by a different facet
Of the same moral purpose
To the extent that we have cultivated it
To the extent that we desire to know God

Directions

We are all moving in different directions
But our makeup is aligned at the same slope
We can move a mountain
If we have the faith of a mustard seed
If we seek God with all our heart
We can have eternal life
With even the effort of our own will
We can effect great change
As long as we are in sync
With the Greater Moral Purpose
As long as we act
In concert with God's will
We share the same substance
But we each have a different mind
A different will and heart
We can share in general moral purpose
But each is going toward a different direction
It is where these lines of purpose intersect
That we are linked in a bigger task
Like each cell we live and die in our own timing
We have our own body and our own director
As an organ we are working towards a larger purpose
And in this way we can act as one

Many wills, with the same thing in their minds
and on their hearts
With one Leader
We follow with a mind that thinks its own thoughts
Just because we are not the same spirit
Does not mean we cannot work as one in the
Spirit of God
We do not need to be God
To know that we are interlinked in relation-
ships
And connected in Greater Purpose

Holy Spirit

These contours upon which we travel
Are the straightest path to the nearest soul
We can know we are in agreement
And work as with one body
Because we understand
We are each separate members
That have wills working together
While we keep our hearts and minds focused
But what is this road upon
Which the mind is linked to its vessel
How does the distinct mind of one being
Understand what the mind of the other is do-
ing
Without asking and without explanation
Without external signal of any kind?
It is like the cool current of wind
In the penetrating heat of our yellow sun
It is a subtlety that unites our thinking
And brings us together for greater purpose
Donning the protective mask
In one fluid motion
Or knowing what line of code is wrong
Just by seeing how the web page looks
There is another level
In which we understand
Another way in which things happen
Than the official regulations

It is how someone writes without an outline
And still puts together a coherent argument
It is in a way that cannot be pinned down
It has no universal name
In the Bible we know it
As the Holy Spirit
Or God in the world
Who brings together His flock

2.4.3 Heavenly Father Poetry

The Perfect Programmer

God is the perfect programmer
We are all his programs
I am a flawed program
How can this be?
My source code was perfect
In every respect
But I let others add code
I started out stable and efficient
I was useful to my Creator
But the other code was sloppy
And my executable became corrupted
I kept on throwing up error messages
I blamed the kernel and other software
Everyone was wrong but me
My file formats were universally compatible
But I decided not to publish my new source
code
Or even document my APIs
I would only release a software development kit
If people purchased a service plan
I used other peoples programs
I downloaded illegally off the Internet
I began to see nothing wrong
With being infested with viruses
I was getting more bloated by the day
And my features grew so great in number
That I became too complex to compile without
errors

I began to seek other business models
I released some source code but not all
No one will develop me anymore
I rely on my my public relations staff
To buy my way into your computer
I claim no responsibility for damage
I would be recalled
But people don't expect computers to work

Praise and Criticism

I have a memory problem
And a vision problem
My eyes are fine
And my mind works great
But I have huge blind spots
I constantly pray for protection
And I have a great memory
For how people have hurt me
But it is only when I stop and rest
That I remember to give thanks
For all God has protected me from
My greatest problem is fear
And I have struggled with chronic
Physical and mental suffering
And my life has not been easy
For a middle class American's standard
But what I was saved from
Is greater than I could have imagined
I lost my mind due to my service in the Army
But I still have all my limbs and organs intact
I was able to get out of the military
When my mental illness interfered with my job
And my peace of mind
I had allergic pink eye for 3-1/2 years
But it ended with my first anti-psychotic medicine
When we watch the news
It is mostly negative
And people are quick to point out problems
But rarely offer solutions
It is easy to criticize others actions

When they do not act heroic
But how do we know what we will due
When we are in a crisis

Praise God for Everything

Praise God for everything good
We know of or have experienced
Praise God for everything good
We have yet to or may never discover
Praise God for everything good
We have labeled as a coincidence
Praise God for what we have learned
Jesus is the best teacher
Praise God for what we have learned
Sins to avoid and the way to salvation
Praise God for when we have peace
Spiritual as well as physical
Praise God for when we have plenty
God provides for His creation
Praise God for when we have stability
In our jobs and in the universe
Praise God for His forgiveness
For when we treat each other bad
Praise God for healing us
From bad decisions and from injuries
Praise God for everlasting life
If we only submit to God
Praise God for His suffering
For our bad choices
Praise God for our freedom
We can choose good or bad
Praise God for being who He is
Supreme in character, wisdom, and power
Praise God for loving us
Even when we don't return His love

Awesome God

God is not your little sister
Who you need to protect

God is not in debt
You don't need to finance Him
God does not need an advocate
He is God whether He is worshiped or not
God is not pressed for time
He has plenty of time for you
You do not need to argue God's case
Creation speaks out His name
God doesn't need you to fulfill his plans
God is in control of history
If you can travel back and forth in time
God is already there and everywhere else
If we travel to another planet
God is just as much in control
If we have a multi verse and parallel realities
It is there because God created it
God is not limited by having poor followers
God is all powerful in and of Himself
God doesn't just watch you in church
God sees all
God doesn't like Christians better than unbelievers
God loves us because He chooses to
God will not do evil
This does not mean His power is limited in any way
God does not play favorites
You don't get points for good deeds
God will judge everyone
And none of us will pass without Christ
God does not struggle to defeat evil
He destroys it in His timing and with His methods
God doesn't care what we think is immoral
He invented morality
God is not fooled like people are
God knows your heart

Family Appreciation

Thanks God for my family

Thank God for my mom
Whose encouragement uplifts
And who continually advocates for me
Thanks God for my dad
Whose advice has saved me from harm
His prayers give me hope
Thank God for my sister
Who listens carefully to what I say
Whose visits cheer me up
Thank God for my Uncle Clive
Who faithfully looks through my work
Whose careful words brighten my day
Thanks God for my stuffed cows
Who are always near by
Whose humor and thoughts keep my company
Thank God for giving my a family
That is always near in spirit
And who put my needs ahead of theirs
Who are anxious to hear what I have learned
And who consider what I say
With open minds and careful consideration
Who care enough to consider my feelings
And adjust their words and tone
Who I can consider colleagues
And who understand what I am doing
Better than anyone else
Thanks for your inspiration
And your love

Tolerance

Is is better that we not offend
The pride of those doomed to eternal death
Or better that more have eternal life?
Is the preservation of one more year of life
Of significance when we count in eternity?
Is it so important that we have personal trans-
portation
That we sacrifice our young men's lives?
Do we seek to be so tolerant of the wealthy
That we let the poor suffer violence?

Are we so addicted to popular culture
That we no longer care what is right and wrong?
Are we so far devolved morally
That we throw away our future?
Because some people used Christ's name for
evil
Does that mean that there is no truth in the
Bible?
Why do we give to charity
When we vote against those in need?
Why speak out for what is wrong
When we don't even try to live morally?
Do we need to rewrite history
To prove what we are doing is right?
Isn't it a bad sign that we have no faith?
There is more to the world than white America
God values those in Asia and Africa
Even if we won't even help feed them
When the rest of the world hates you
You might think you did something wrong
When you read the Bible and get offended
Do you think you are better than God?
Who are we to judge the world
From our Postmodern point of view?
Atheism is a blip in world history
And the future is more Christian than pagan
And there are more Muslims than atheists
Do we only tolerate those with big lobbies?
Do we only look after those who can speak for
themselves?
When we choose to give some rights and not
others
What is the basis for this decision?
Why do we put women and children
Above the lives of our soldiers?
Why do we disregard the lives of animals
When our society is built on their labor?
There is more to life than American football
And there is more going on in the world
Outside Hollywood and Wall Street

God, Help!

We look around us
And we hear rumors
All point to our destruction
Our imminent demise
Our fresh water is infected
Garbage drifts in the sea
Our forests are destroyed
Daily more are burned down
Our food make us sick
And we eat ourselves to death
We generate dangerous waste
For ten thousand years
Deadly incurable diseases
Spread like wildfire
Our rich steal from the poor
And conduct scams without penalty
Our president is a dictator
He starts wars out of revenge
Our politicians don't care about us
They follow the largest sum of money
Our religious leaders
Preach hate and prejudice
The people don't seem to care
As long as they can see the football game
And there is plenty of beer
They will sell their souls
To not have to get up off the couch
God, we repent of our sin
Please have mercy on us
We take full responsibility
And are willing to pay the penalties
Please forget our sin
And be our God
And we will be Your servants
We will put the poor and the rejected
Above our own desires
We will honor You
With our actions and not just our words

Walking Forward

With back straight
And eyes level
A relaxed walk
With long strides
Brilliant blue sky
And radiant sun
Long rows of books
Quick glances
And moving on
With each turn
And a rapid survey
Passing by numerous sections
Already absorbed
With each step
I pass walls of books
And with each shelf
Years of study
I am beginning to feel
More relaxed
And sure of my ideas
There is a subtlety
That exists in the mind
And a slight change in pace
That signals growth
And increasing certitude
The times of clarity
Multiply in number
I still don't have plans
For tomorrow
But there is a stillness
And a gentle attitude
Overflowing from my heart
And my head is a little lighter
On my shoulders
The weight is slowly receding
And I get glimpses of peace
And times of conviction
That experience exponential growth
And continued enthusiasm

Morning Sunshine

In the cool of the day
Darkness fades gently
And the sun rises confidently
Over the distant horizon
At what point does it become day?
Where exactly is the horizon?
I learn sometimes in leaps
Sometimes at a slow walk
God continues to rise in my heart
I do not know when I will fade
But I know God will continue
To outshine the darkness of my soul
We bow to God's brilliance
And are blinded by His Presence
We are dark and low
Not worthy to be the dirt
On which He treads
We live most our life in the shadows
It is hard to watch the sun
We hide from the intense light
But are afraid when it leaves
We scatter far and wide
To our own devices
When night falls
But we need to return
To the radiance of our Lord
Before we start our day
Under the direct light of the sun

2.4.4 Son of God Poetry

The Missionaries

God does not love America
More than any other country
God does not condone wars
Over natural resources
God is not Republican
He does not support the Religious "Right"
Bush is not following the Bible

America was never a Christian nation
The Bible does not promote capitalism
Christians should speak out against corporations
TV evangelists are seldom
Preaching from the Bible correctly
The Bible is incompatible with Science
The way it is taught in schools
The Bible is more Scientifically sound
Than the theory of evolution
God is not in danger of being outdated
America is regressing
God is worshiped in the Third World
Only Europe has no faith
Religion is not a competition
The Bible has no equal
We don't need to denigrate others
To support our beliefs
God is not White
God loves all races
God is not a God of hate
God loves all people
No matter what they have done
And no matter who they are

God Speaks

God speaks all languages
He speaks to us in our language
Arabic and Chinese
Spanish and Pali
Hebrew and Russian
Croatian and Pigeon
Farsi and French
There is a word for Christ
In every language
There is a word for suffering
There is a word for submission
There is a word for sacrifice
There is a word for humanity
There is a word for hope

There is a word for joy
There is a word for peace
There is a word for life
There is a word for eternal
There is a word for forgiven
There is a word for repentance
There is a word for belief
There is a word for sin
There is a word for good
There is a word for heaven
There is a word for love
There is a word for victory
There is a word for change
There is a word for compassion
There is a word for service

Religion Means Education

The Bible is not just words
For memorization and quotation
It is not a means to control
Or a way to win arguments
The Bible is not a set of rules
To conform to
The Bible is not a goal to achieve
Or a means to a higher consciousness
Christians do not ascend
And God is not trying
To advance us technologically
God does not make you rich
If you are devout
God is not a reason for bad behavior
Or an excuse to give up
God does not want us
To be workaholics
The Bible is a weapon
Against our own selfishness
And our pride and stubbornness
But we must plunge the sword
Into ourselves
God wants us to learn

He wants us to grow
Not to be wealthy or more advanced
But to be moral and healthy
We do not grow by secret knowledge
Or by special powers
We learn who God is
And learn how to submit to Him
We learn the source of our problems
Is our own poor choices
And we get deliverance from them
To the extent that we give God control
Of our minds, our hearts, and our souls

Campus Community

Under the cover
Of strong oak branches
And on the carpet of
Carefully manicured grass
The entire campus
Is overflowing with deep green
And on these memorial benches
Of weathered cedar and black iron
I watch with fading eyelids
As people pass the Frisbee by
Which dogs catch in mid air
And students cover the lawn
Leading up to the ornate marble library
Ivy is digesting the brick halls
And the sounds of construction
Permeates the adjacent buildings
All the vertical wood surfaces
Are covered in propaganda
A gray bearded man
Plays the guitar
And sings songs
Only fully understood by him
Softly a block away
What a community
What an idyllic atmosphere
I like to think that

Maybe some are believers

Open Market

You can smell the incense a mile away
And you can see everyone's toes
It is Saturday again downtown
The booths are all assembled
And manned with merchants
There are pamphlets and stickers
Posters and pens
All carrying the logo
Of a charity or small business
This is how capitalism was envisioned
This is a diverse gathering
Fresh picked produce
And organic baked goods
Hemp clothing and more
Everything is produced locally
Or a product of fair trade
There is silver jewelry galore
And every kind of clothing tie dyed
The local charities are out in
Solid numbers and well stocked
With sign up sheets
And passionate volunteers
There are dozens of groups
Fighting to save the forests
And dozens of groups
For equality and justice
Globally and locally
There is continual music
And the aisles are crowded
The lines slowly shift forward
And the restrooms are portable
A Christian group lurks in the distance
If you squint real hard

Epic Hero

Christ is the greatest epic hero

The most powerful and the strongest
But His goal was not war
And He did not kill
His message was second
To His example
And greatest of all
Was His humility joined
With His divinity
Conquering the spirit world
Or starting an empire
Was not His way
He conquered the greatest enemy
The most entrenched traitor
Our heart and our minds
And our sins and bad attitudes
He healed and He prophesied
He was merciful and had authority
He was a descendant of the Jewish people
And He was the One who created all
Because of my Hero, Jesus
I have eternal life
He did the hardest thing anyone has done
To make it as easy as possible for me
I do not have the energy to do yoga
Or the leadership to start an ashram
I don't have the discipline to pray 5 times a day
Or the money to journey to Mecca
Christ has provided the only way
For my salvation
And He has invited everyone to join
And the cost is free as in freedom

Ancestor

Born as a descendant
Of the Scottish monarchy
And with many castles to
Our family name
If we could prove it
Starting out to free Scotland
From the brutal English

I later gave up
The quest for nationalism
Not only did the Stewards
Inherit the throne of England
But I have a greater legacy
Which I have given up on
The previous ancestry for
I am born again
And grafted into
The lineage of Israel
And am part of the inheritance
Of the Son Of God
The second Adam
Christ, the Creator of All
Has chosen me
Before the beginning of time
To be one of His children
And any who will believe
Are all God's chosen people
Whether Asian or European
African or North American
Latin American or Australian

Center of Gravity

Night has fallen on Europe
And it is late afternoon in America
But the sun is just rising in Africa
And it is still morning in Latin America
And it is a few hours before dawn in Asia
Christ is universally understood
And is available to all believers
In Europe and North America
The white man is diminishing in numbers
And his power does not extend
Beyond his own continent
Even at home, foreigners from the south
Are overwhelming the West
But Christ loves the South
Just as much as the North
But the white man has lost his religion

And those from Africa and Asia
Are embracing and comprehending God
In ways that the West never could
Christ is not just a moral teacher
He is a living God
Christ loves the poor
And identifies with the losers of war
The spiritual world is real
Even more than Science could theorize
Christ is not an abstract concept
But a real force in everyday life
God is not just our Creator
He is our Ancestor
He wants to adopt us
To be a part of His lineage
And to share His inheritance
God shapes history
In ways we could never imagine
And God has a special plan
For those in the Africa and Asia
For the persecuted and the fatherless
From those rich in Spirit

Crossroads

We are at a turning point
As believers worldwide
We have passed on the torch
To our friends in the South
What does God have planned
For those who understand Christ better?
What more will God reveal
In the 21st century?
There is no need
To spread the Gospel southward
We need missionaries in the North
There is nothing we can teach the South
Now we need to learn from them
Africa is becoming the leader
The younger child that God loves
And we have become wealthy

We have given up our inheritance
For things of this world
We can no longer see the truth
Of God's divine intervention
And the miracles available
For those who truly believe
We look down on the humble
And reject those with problems
We blame the sick
The physically and mentally weak
For our declining power in the world
We don't realize
Our lack of character
And are unable to comprehend
What sacrifice means
We are an empire on decline
Will those in the South pray for us?

Chapter 3

Book of Belief

by Ben Huot

3.1 The Purpose of Philosophy

3.1.1 General Ideas

3.1.2 Psychology in Philosophy

Do you keep on trying to solve the symptoms of your problems, and are never able to deal with the source of your problems? If you constantly try to improve yourself and your life and are tired of the over simplicity of pop psychology, you can get deeper insights and more sophisticated and useful answers by reading philosophy. Philosophy is more than just an intellectual exercise and has more applications than just ethics.

Reading philosophy is like reading an inspirational self help book but with much more creativity and originality. Good philosophy is always very practical. Any good theory should be a useful guide in real life situations. If you have found philosophy to be overly abstract, difficult to understand, or not very practical, you should try reading Eastern philosophy or Existentialism.

Some people who are religious don't feel a need for philosophy, but philosophy is not a substitute for religion or a competitor to religion. Religion and philosophy add value to each other. Religion naturally brings up philosophical problems and philosophy is completed and answered by religion. You must commit to a particular philosophy and religion to understand them and find practical uses for it. But the answers to the questions philosophy brings up are not immediately resolved by religious doctrine.

You will find answers to what you struggle with over a long period of time, after experiencing a wide variety of different situations and spending years reflecting on all of this. Just because the answers are not quick does not mean that you are not doing it right. The reason why you haven't already solved the problems you have is that they are difficult to deal with and just because you can see a simple solution to your problem does not mean it will be easy. But philosophy and religion are worth the

time involved in their discovery and they are one of the most effective ways to find meaning in life.

Ethics and Consistency in Philosophy

Philosophy reveals what kind of person you are by forcing you to prioritize your values. By forcing you to choose what standard you evaluate truth and morality, you learn more about yourself. Are you the kind of person who puts utility above all, do you believe that avoiding pain or staying alive is the most important value, or do you find that being strong and independent in thinking is best? Do you believe that moral standards should be followed because God says so, because they are good for you in the long run, because they are practical, or do you believe that you need to develop your own standards?

Philosophy teaches ethics by emphasizing consistency, which is another word for fairness. No matter what philosophy you go by, you make a deliberate decision to be the same in your expectations of yourself as you expect in others. This is one of the reasons why Existentialism talks so much about anxiety and despair: when you make a decision in how to behave, it is only fair that you have the same expectations of everybody else in that given situation and this should cause you to feel an awesome sense of responsibility (in making this kind of decision).

Philosophy can help you find a purpose and depth to your life. The reason I so enjoy reading the writings of major philosophers is their passion. If you read from Rousseau, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Camus, Hafiz, Meera, Kabir, Chuang Tzu, Bodhidharma, Dogen, and other major philosophers, you will realize that important philosophers have often had difficult lives fighting for their belief amongst much opposition and have made immense sacrifices in the way they live their lives to be consistent with their beliefs.

Creativity and Philosophy

Philosophy and religion are very creative fields, except instead of producing some sort of physical art, philosophy

and religion creates new ideas. Just like artists use different types of media concepts to express their creative ideas in, philosophers start out with a basic set of concepts known as a philosophical or religious school.

Examples of philosophical and religious schools are: Stoicism, Epicurianism, Empiricism, Rationalism, Existentialism, Sufi Islam, Bhakti Hinduism, Sikism, Theravada Buddhism, Zen Buddhism, Pure Land Buddhism, Jainism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Legalism/Realism. Some of the greatest philosophers and religious leaders have actually successfully combined more than one school, like: Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Hegel, Kabir, Chu Hsi, and Bodhidharma.

Another way in which philosophy and art are related is that much of Asian philosophy and religion and Existentialism are expressed in visual art, literature, and music. The concepts are philosophy, but the creative work is art. Often there is an elaborate symbolism that is used to create a bridge between the two.

People can express their devotion to God and to ethical principles by creating artistic works. In the West, we often see religion as a set of doctrines that have to be accepted in their totality or not at all. In the East, it is commonly considered acceptable to mix and match different aspects of different philosophies and religions. You don't have to accept a fixed doctrine that someone else has put together.

One of the big differences between Asian and European art is that in the West, we often create a picture, because we think that it looks visually attractive, without necessarily illustrating a philosophical or religious idea. We feel free to express ourselves, with any style or combination of styles, without committing to any belief system. In the East, it is traditional to evaluate art by how well it conforms to a specific classical tradition, or how it illustrates a particular concept, in a particular school of religion or philosophy. There are established symbols and methods of writing literature or painting and conforming to this tradition is what makes it beautiful.

3.1.3 Schools of Philosophy

Paradox (Also Known As Non-Dualism)

Paradox is often seen as a synonym for a contradiction, but that would be non-sensical and is not used in philosophy in this way. Dualism is a descriptor for opposite concepts like male and female or kindness and seriousness. Non-dualism or paradox acknowledges that often things that appear to be true opposites are actually related, just as the yin yang symbol represents: there is a seed of the yin in the heart of the yang and vice versa. Good and evil are often thought of as a duality, but philosophies generally have a system of ethics, so good and evil are not related paradoxically, although society's conception of right and wrong could be a paradox.

The Supernatural and Asian Philosophy and Religion

Many Christians think that studying Eastern philosophy and religion will somehow push people into the occult. The answer to this assumption is not a simple one, but I can explain the situation very clearly.

To explain the reality of the situation, a person needs to understand the basic progression of religion. The earliest phase was that of Animism, where everybody worshipped fallen angels and each country had their own gods, while 1 person or one small group of people worshipped the Creator (who was later understood to be Jesus Christ). The next phase was that of the revealed religions, which started in Asia mostly and are the basis for most major mono-theistic religions and then there were also the major non-religious philosophies of China and India that occurred at the same era. The latest phase came out of the west, with the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, based on the Greek and Roman animism, which is the basis for modern Atheism, Science, and the Theosophy movement, and modern Paganism came as the final phase.

So the Bible forbids doing any activity that involves the supernatural, without being done by God, in the way

that is described in the Scriptures. So, as a Christian, I am not going to read any type of books about supernatural practices of Animism or modern Paganism (New Age). The way things that are supernatural are dealt with in traditional Indian and Chinese philosophies is that there is no understanding of this Biblical concept and in addition, a lot of these philosophies don't distinguish between and are many times combined with different forms of Animistic supernatural practices. This occurs because Indian and Chinese philosophies and religions are not exclusive, like Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, in that it is perfectly acceptable to take parts of the Chinese and Indian philosophies and religions and combine them with any other belief system.

On the flip side, there are many writings (most of the most important) that only contain philosophy and no supernatural practices, so if you go by my list in the Book of Lists or read about each work in depth, before reading it, you can get a very deep understanding of the Indian and Chinese philosophies and religions without getting involved in any Animist supernatural practices.

Confucianism

Confucianism is a philosophy indigenous to China. The Chinese philosophies are unique in that they are mostly concerned with ethics. In Chinese philosophy, like Chinese medicine, is not overly concerned with why something works, but rather that it does work.

The proof for various historical schools lie in the belief that in ancient China, that the government was more virtuous and that the society was much more peaceful and stable. In Confucian and Taoist texts, the arguments are given support by how previous sages ran the government in the past by quoting decisions individual leaders made and their historical results.

When Confucius was writing his philosophy, he based it not on his original ideas, but on how the previous dynasty ran the government. He got famous for editing the classical Book of Songs, which was a collection of love stories taken from all over China. Confucius interpreted this

romantic love as love of the state.

He believed that ethics was made up of humanity and ritual. Ritual is similar to what we call manners or protocol and humanity refers to paying attention to people's feelings and situation. He believed that the scholar should run government and that in reading the classics that the scholar would learn to be ethical.

Later on, the government gave tests for people, who wished to be leaders (as the government ran all business, which was mostly farming) and to qualify, the candidates had to prove how much they understood Confucianism, by writing poetry about its concepts. Even though China had much more advanced technology in the past, they got past over economically and militarily by Europe, because instead of rewarding advancements in technologies of war, the Chinese government rewarded the study of the arts and the humanities.

Taoism

Taoism has two major schools, both of which are fundamentally different. There is Religious (or Esoteric) Taoism, which is a form of animism, based on the pre-Confucian indigenous religion of China. And then there is Philosophical Taoism, that is based on the philosophy of the I Ching, without the religious elements and is described in the writing of Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, and Lieh Tzu.

The philosophical Taoism is the original Taoism and is how the scholars of China practiced Taoism. When I refer to Taoism, I mean philosophical Taoism. If you find Taoist texts written after the time of Chuang Tzu and Lieh Tzu, they are mostly of Religious Taoism.

Taoism is the paradoxical counterpart to Confucianism. Whereas Confucianism is a government supported philosophy that advocates the idea of sacrificing your own self for the good of the society, Taoism stresses individuality and independence of spirit. Whereas Confucianism is concerned mostly with human affairs and the cultivation of reason, Taoism is more focused on nature and on the human spirit.

Taoism is not a religion, although it does deal with

the spiritual side of life. Taoism acknowledges a creator God, but is very vague about what that entails. Taoism, like Confucianism, is about ethics, primarily. The highest good in Taoism is staying alive, at the expense of material gain or social standing.

Taoism stresses a very extreme form of non-dualism. In Chuang Tzu, the “Discussion on Considering All Things Equal” warns of false distinctions. Taoism teaches that society has mixed up true right and wrong as it originally was understood and works against the natural state of man and so has lost its virtue. Taoism claims to be the original philosophy of China, predating the dynasty that Confucius celebrates.

The values of Taoism are humility and compassion and Taoism considers all sentient beings (including animals) to be equal in worth and to be respected equally. Taoist virtue is described as a state of spontaneity and tranquility, that is felt, while an experienced athlete is in the middle of performing, or an experienced artist or craftsmen is in the middle of creating something.

Taoism is often mixed up with Buddhism, because Zen Buddhism is a synchronization of Buddhism and Taoism, but Taoism predates Zen Buddhism by at least hundreds of years. Buddhism and Taoism are actually very opposite in nature. There is a famous picture of Confucius, Lao Tzu, and Buddha in front of a honey pot. Buddha abstains, Lao Tzu dives in, and Confucius deliberates.

Existentialism

Existentialism was made famous by Sartre, who named a philosophical school, in which he included many philosophers both before and at his time, many of which vigorously rejected the label. Modern Existentialism originated with Kierkegaard and was Christian in its origins. The basis for Existentialism is in the writings of the Apostle Paul and in the writings of Augustine.

Existentialists talks frequently about the distinction between subject and object. Kierkegaard believed that we cannot be objective because of our fallen state. According to Kierkegaard, the only being that can be objective is

God. Kierkegaard and most other Existentialists believe that any system of thought cannot adequately describe the human spirit, because free will is what defines human being (human being is what Existentialism literally means).

Kierkegaard and Camus talk considerably about the absurdity of life. Kierkegaard is also obsessed with humility. Kierkegaard sees Christ's being a man and God at the same time as the greatest paradox. He also believes that our relationship with God is paradoxical too. He believes when we are most conscious of our sins and faults that we are actually closer to God than at any other time.

Kierkegaard and Sartre believe that we should feel a tremendous weight of responsibility when we make choices. Kierkegaard and Sartre both stress the importance of the freedom of will. Kierkegaard, although a committed Christian who obviously wants everyone to go to Heaven, does not believe in proselytizing, because he believes that saving faith only exists, when we believe in Christ, without anybody pressuring us into it. Kierkegaard believes that a Christian should resist the pressures of social conformity. He even goes so far to say that when everybody is Christian that nobody is Christian.

3.2 Main Ideas

3.2.1 Why Study the Old World?

- Have you attended public school but didn't like it precisely because you wanted to learn and you were bored out of your mind?
- Were you more interested in clubs and extra curricular activities because your school work was so repetitive and dull?
- Did you get so disillusioned by the public school system that you decided to put off college and join the military or start out in a trade?

- Do you enjoy reading and learning about other cultures and are tired of studying the American Revolution and the American Civil War?
- Are you tired of reading white American and English literature?
- Do you enjoy learning about other cultures?
- Do you see the supernatural as important in everyday life and realize that Science is not the solution to our fundamental problems?
- Have you had trouble classifying yourself into a particular social group and are more interested in helping a few friends and close family than becoming famous?
- Do you really want the world to be transformed and realize that God is the answer?

If you have had similar experiences and feelings, I invite you to Discover the Spiritual Old World with me.

3.2.2 Main Objective

Broader World View

When I present different ideas of mine, I am not doing so to persuade you, but to stimulate your thinking and help you find a broader view of the world. I think that the world is becoming too analytical and is relying too much on facts and on Science as their only sources for truth.

Holistic Worldview

It is not that there is no place for linear thinking, but that there is also value in holistic, artistic, and creative approaches to problems as well. I am not trying to get rid of Science, but rather show people that the spiritual world is just as important and that emotions are as useful as facts in decision making.

Think For Yourself

I could have argued some of my main philosophical ideas more directly to the point that they would be much more persuasive, but I am more interested in getting you to think for yourself rather than just getting my ideas adopted. I want people to come up with their own ideas and take responsibility for their outcomes rather than just regurgitating what they were told.

What God Wants

I believe this idea of coming up with your own ideas is an integral part of the Bible. God wants us to freely choose to follow Him and to choose to follow him with our intellect and emotions as well as our spirit. He wants us to really believe in what He values and take risks in applying these truths we need to accept whether we understand them or not in the best way we know how.

Christ and Christianity

We need to see beyond a set of doctrines and realize that Christ is more than what a systematic theology can explain and accept Him as a role model and as an individual. We need to pursue a life as it was lived by Christ in its entirety and to do so we must use our intellect and emotions to apply His personality and values to our very different situations.

3.2.3 How I Can Both be a Free Thinker and a Christian

Christianity is about Free Choice

Many people associate free thought with Atheism and Science. But the most real part of the world is the spiritual world and the thing that defines humanity is our free choice. Although Science is not rejected by specific Biblical Scriptures, a worldview that sees things only from a material perspective misses out on so much.

Christianity is Multicultural

Many colonial powers tried to use Christianity to control people in the third world and in their own countries. But, if you read the Bible and talk to most people in the world who call themselves Christians, you will realize that they come mostly from the third world and are very often very anti-western. Christianity is the world's most popular and culturally diverse belief system and it did not get to the point it is today, by advocating the domination of people.

Christianity is Misunderstood in the West

The reason why Christianity has been used to support the establishment is because it is a poor person's religion, but all the negative ideas people have tried to make the Bible say are not in there. People in the West need to read the other books of the Bible that you don't hear often in Western churches, like the Prophets and they need to re-read the Letters of Paul in a totally different context, to really understand what the Bible is all about.

The Church is not the Problem

The Church dominated Western Civilization, in Medieval Times, but the basis for Democracy and Capitalism has nothing to do with the Bible. The basis for modern ideas of toleration are often thought of as a result of the Enlightenment. But, if you read John Locke's Letter Concerning Toleration, you will realize that the basis for not pressuring someone into believing in something comes from Biblical concepts.

Why Christianity is the Best Religion

Christianity is the best belief system, because it effectively deals with our spiritual selves, in a way that no other belief system does. The Bible explains the way to freedom and dignity, for all those suffering. Christ is a loving God, who saves us from destroying ourselves and we are now seeing the destruction of Revelations taking place before us. We are beginning to realize that our

Apocalypse is self induced and the environmental disasters, that we will be experiencing, are all the direct result of sin and greed. Our problems are not a matter of us not being smart enough or things that can be avoided through technological advancement.

Solving our Problems

Our true enemy is not the devil, but our own selfishness. God wants us to be creative and happy in life, but He knows, as He has lived as one of us, that we need Him in our lives, to find fulfillment and joy. We need to embrace the spiritual side of life and live as God intended us to, or else we will destroy ourselves, not just economically, but morally and emotionally. But God wants us to make this choice of our own free will. And God has different paths for all of us, but they start with a simple prayer.

3.3 Ethical Vision

3.3.1 Why Avoid Objectivity?

Fear of Controversy

It is a sad situation today where so few writers of non-fiction know so little about their subjects that they find a need to hide behind facts and statistics. Writers are afraid of having people not like them, because their readers disagree with their conclusions. Most people think that religion and politics are controversial, but in any discipline in even the most narrow and academic subjects are constantly torn part by bitter and nasty debates and whose participants are in a constant struggle to get followers to their approach. It is sad that where there used to be a belief that the free exchange of ideas was of utmost importance, there now seems like there are only certain opinions that people are allowed to have, if they want to be considered as serious or an educated person.

Believe in Yourself

My approach is that I want people to come up with their own ideas and I actually don't want any followers. But I still have very definite opinions on almost everything and I will argue in favor of what I believe. It is great that others disagree strongly as I enjoy real diversity caused by real differentiators like: income, regional history, belief system, political beliefs, family influence, sub culture, hobbies, career, talents, life experiences, and the like. Lets learn to disagree even on important issues and have some faith in what we believe in enough to know that it will prevail. The only thing that I hope to agree upon with my readers is the avoidance of the mainstream beliefs and of the supernatural.

3.3.2 Definitions

Defining Terms

One of the most important aspect of debate is at the very beginning, where you define your terms. Many arguments are in opposition to each other mainly because of a difference, in what the key words involved mean. Philosophy is largely about defining words and philosophical schools are often branched out, according to the philosopher's understanding, of key terms. When you are not clear on how someone is using words and what they mean by them, you cannot fully understand their message.

Denotation

Denotation is the dictionary definition of a word. Although words evolve over time, according to how they are used or misused, the denotation is a more precise and direct understanding of the word in question. Denotation is the official definition, although there can be more than one and the wording used differs by dictionary.

Connotation

Connotation is based on what a word is thought to imply, rather than what its official definition in. The word Christian communicates a wide range of different stereotypes, that have nothing to do with what the word Christian means. Many other loaded words can divide people, not based on the standard meaning of words, but rather on what prejudices people assume to be true, based on public education, government and powerful lobbies propaganda, peer pressure, group think, and political correctness.

My Use of Connotation and Denotation

When I use many of the words I frequently refer to, I often am writing about how I perceive the connotation and how it corrupts people's understanding, of the reality of the situation. I also use certain words, for their connotation, rather than their denotation. I believe that the word Christian is used very stereotypically and challenged by poorly formed arguments. These arguments are based mostly on inaccurate assumptions, personal experience that are not typical, and on looking for arguments against Christians, instead of trying to find the truth. In other words, because many of those arguing against Christianity do not stick to facts and are not consistent or rational in their arguments, I feel fine with treating Atheism and Science the same way. But I will not claim to be objective, like those, who often attack Christianity, claim.

3.3.3 Radical Equality

The Principle

The big principle that unites most my ethical beliefs is a principle I call "radical equality". My sense of fairness is not based on getting my own way, but, rather on every body being completely equal in every way. People, animals, and the entire ecosystem should be treated with equal weight and should all be empowered to enjoy the same rights and responsibilities. All rules should apply in every situation and should be based on general principles,

instead of detail oriented laws that were designed, for rich people to not have to follow them, but are targeted for poor people instead.

Same Application in Every Situation

I believe that animals should have the same rights as people, that employees and employers both have an obligation to each other, that immigration law should be the same for every country, that women should be treated exactly the same as men, that if it is wrong to kill or hurt a person the same applies to an unborn baby as applies to an animal as applies to the environment as applies to any one else.

I believe that social services are as important, as law enforcement and national security; that businesses and individuals should pay the same taxes and have the same responsibilities; that father and mothers should have an equal access to their children, when they get divorced; that the environment is as important as the economy; that everyone should get the same financial aid for college; that everyone should have an equal choice as to what education they get; and people should always follow laws, no matter how unimportant they are, how hard it is to get caught, how little the punishment is, or inconvenient they are.

I believe that laws should be more severe, based on how many people are hurt and that economic crimes will get the same penalties as “violent” or physical crimes; that our policies toward other countries should be rated on how they treat their people and not on how much money corporations can make off of their resources; that we should give equal consideration in transportation funding, per person, based on how much energy they consume, in their method of transport; that any organization that has employees and receives money should be taxed equally, no matter what the organization is: a small business, a non-profit, or a large corporation.

Consistency Plus Holistic Worldview

In my writings, I have combined the ideas of radical equality, or extreme consistency, with a holistic worldview. I apply the same values or ethical standards to both: religion and politics, to my use of money and my treatment of others, and to my philosophical reasoning and my writing style. I don't see the environment and the economy, labor rights and animal rights, or my personal morality and my expectations of others as separate things. My religion affects everything in my life including: my beliefs, how I spend my money, how I relate with others, what I choose to write about, and what I expect out of others. My key value is radical equality.

Reality and Ethical Ideals

I realize that I don't have the ability to change the course of government or the culture and even if I do eventually have an influence, it might be centuries away if at all. But just like we still try to follow the ideals in the US Constitution and our religious writings, even in the face of corruption and greed, so we need ethical/moral standards to strive for. Just like in Christianity we get forgiven for everything we turn from and feel bad about, we still need to do our best to reform our ways, to have deeds that provide proof for our faith. We should continue to do as much as we can and not give up just because change is hard or that we can't get others to fully change their ways.

3.3.4 Redundancy

Plan on Being Short

It seems like most people like to put everything to the last minute and the last dollar. Not having extra money and extra time to do something or buy something is asking for trouble. It almost always takes people 4 times as long to finish something than they thought. There is always something unexpected, that you need to allow extra money for. Car repairs can cost thousands very easily and medical bills can easily be in the tens of thousands.

Be Self Reliant

Never rely on anyone else, to do something, or to be on time for anything. Always have backups of your backups, for your important computer files, as backups and the originals can easily fail. Everything fails and you will fail yourself.

Murphy's Law

Redundancy is needed in every walk of life and in every aspect of your life. The one thing I believe in with my whole heart other than the Bible is Murphy's Law. Everything that can go wrong will. Just plan on everything, that could, by any possibility, not work, always assume it will not work and plan ahead accordingly.

Have More Than You Need

Of course you cannot plan out everything and not everything is so important. But anything you value must have an alternate plan. Plan for not having power, running water, or sewer, for at least 72 hours, in the worst time possible. Always be prepared for the weather to change. Carry extra money in cash, to get yourself home, no matter where you are. Do not depend on battery power or credit cards. Always have at least several months of salary saved. Make sure you can get to the money, even if your home is destroyed.

Risky Investments

Don't invest any money, you cannot lose, in anything less reliable than US government bonds or in the bank, earning interest. Never put any money in the stock market that you cannot afford to lose. Most investments are risky to the point of being educated gambling and like gambling in Las Vegas, you can lose everything you have. Do not depend on anything you do not have in cash. Real estate has lost considerable value periodically. Never buy on credit, if you do not have the money, on hand, in the bank, already.

Natural or Man Made Disasters

Plan on your house being destroyed by: flood, earthquake, volcano, or civil unrest. Live in a safe neighborhood and in a city, that is not big enough, to be targeted by terrorists. Have alternate locations, where you can travel to, on foot, where you can live, in the case of natural or man made disasters. Store valuable information, in other locations, than just your house. Keep a list of important phone numbers and addresses.

What to Have on Hand

Always keep water on hand, in enough quantity, to last for, at least 72 hours. Have a sanitary way to dispose of your human waste, without modern plumbing and sewage, on hand, in your house. Keep some sort of self defense on you, most importantly, to keep dogs off you. The best way to deal with animals is pepper spray or even better, do not be in their way. Never feed a wild animal, block its exit, or bother its children.

What the Government Will Do

Do not expect the government to help you out, when you are in a bad situation. Even during natural disasters, the government is there to contain you, rather than help you. If a disaster happens that affects your town, expect people to come to the door, asking for your valuables, with no badges or uniforms, who have firearms, loaded and ready to shoot.

More than Necessary

When you learn multiplication and division, you are getting good at addition and subtraction; when you are learn algebra, you get good as multiplication and division; when you learn calculus, you get good at algebra. In the military, you always train to a higher standard than what is necessary in your job. If you need to run a 5km, learn to run a 10km. If your boss tells you to arrive a 9, get there by no later than 8:30.

Above and Beyond

The only way to be on time is to arrive early. The only way to pass a test is to practice beyond what you are tested on. Always do more than necessary. Always go above and beyond and you will always accomplish what you set out to do.

3.4 Spiritual Vision

3.4.1 No Perfect Solution

You Pay for What You Get

There is no perfect solution to any problems. Everything has its upsides and its downsides. You can't have your cake and eat it too. There are no silver bullets. To get something worthwhile you have to pay for it and not buy something else with the same money. If you don't want to save for something before you buy it, then you will be in debt and you will pay many times the amount you would have before, long after what you have used up what you bought. There is no way around it.

You Can't Get Everything You Want

In computers it is often said that you only get 2 of the following 3: cheap price, easy set up, and works. In software you can have any 2 of the following 3: efficiency, cross-platform, and easy to create.

Roots of Problems with Economy

The problems we have with the economy that have faced almost every government throughout history is that either the government, the leader, and/or the people want to get something without having to save for it and then they want to either get out of paying for it, delay paying for it, and then they try to avoid the inherent risk of doing this. The easy way to solve the problem with credit is to not

use credit and instead of taking on a huge risk by borrowing money for a given venture, you save up your money before hand to buy whatever you want to.

People Want Everything without Working For it

This is the way with every issue including politics: people don't want to have to pay taxes, but they want all kinds of government services. Businesses and non-profits want to use someone else's money to borrow, but then they don't want any outside group that they borrow the money from to exert any influence. People want to win a war fast and cheaply, but they don't want to have to volunteer to fight in it, make sacrifices to support those who have volunteered, and they don't want the ones they are fighting to not like them or their country. Businesses want to be able to use up limited resources and leave their waste without cleaning it up and not have to pay the cost of this permanent damage.

Things Don't Just Happen

Just understand now that no one can give you anything for free, even if they want to. You must fight for everything you have got. You won't win the lottery, but you probably will get cancer. You may work hard, but you probably won't become famous, wealthy, or powerful. You will probably not make any more money than your parents did. You will not find the perfect job, wife, or have perfect children. Things do not just fall in your lap for free. Bad things will happen to you but good things will only come to the few, the lucky, those who know the right people, and will fade away fast.

The Real Solution

To be free of this, accept reality and focus on helping others and secure your place for eternity. The only thing you know for sure will happen is where you will go after you die. You will have to give up everything for it, but it will be not be enough, so God will give it to you for free, as

He has already paid the price. You can either have a brief time with lots of money or everlasting life. Choose now. You cannot have both. Either way it is not free.

3.4.2 How to Help Our World

Most Problems are Spiritual in Nature

Most of the major problems our country is facing now, including our debt crisis, environmental crisis, energy consumption crisis, and the increasing power of terrorists are all spiritual in nature. The judgements in Revelations are all caused by environmental disasters, the resistance to the West in the Muslim world has been very effective in blocking the growth of Christianity, and the reason for most wars (including the present ones in the Middle East) for the last several hundred years at least are planned by those who spiritually control the world behind the scenes. So to deal with these problems politically is not effective, because they are spiritual in nature.

God's Rules

We have no power directly over the spiritual world, but God places certain rules on what things are allowed by whom in the spiritual world. God wants people to be in control of their own destiny, so He allows us to take part in His plans, by praying for His will to be done. This takes away the limitations God places on Himself and increases His influence throughout the world. Why God has chosen to work this way may not make sense to most people, but I know it does work this way.

God is in Control

We do not need to fear the problems in the world today, because God places special protection on His people. It is true that the spiritual forces that hate God, what He stands for, and His people have plenty of power to destroy us, and the reason why we have not been defeated from the beginning is because God is in the world with

His Spirit and doesn't allow those behind the scenes to directly hurt His people. The forces against God have the most power when they are doing things in secret and they can get people to stop praying and reading the Bible.

What We Can Do

We are in control of our future very directly. We can take up the cause and choose to be a part of God's plan for the future, or we can do it our own way, but either way God will ultimately win and we will serve one master or another. The best that we can do to help improve our world is to: pray for God's will to be done, have the right attitude before God, read the Bible, and show God's love in the way we treat others in everything we do.

3.4.3 Solutions for Our Addictions

Our Problems are All Addictions

All our problems in America come down to addictions. Our addictions to drugs and alcohol, addictions to fighting the appearance of age, addictions to games and sports, addictions to information and the Internet, addictions to sex and fetishes, addictions to work and networking, addictions to money and investments, addictions to coffee and sugar, addictions to food and weight loss, and all the other ways in which we distract ourselves are caused by our fear of the increasing signs of global catastrophe. The number one reason why our youth pursue distractions is because they seriously believe they will not live past the age of 30.

Real Solution is Prayer

The real solution to our addictions is to solve our environmental, economic, cultural, and religious divisions, that are increasing in their violent confrontations, because we are at the limits of the oil, water, and soil that we need to survive. There are only 2 solutions: stop our addictions to our distractions in the West or a massive die off

of the poorest part of the population in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. We already know which solution those in power would prefer. The only way to avoid this solution is to pray.

Rebellion Against God is the Cause

We know that all our problems are rooted in our rebellion against the Christian God and His laws. The way to break the cycle is to submit ourselves to God and pray that His will be done. There is no other way to affect change on a global scale. Only God's intervention will save us and will only come when we are truly sorry for our addictions and stop participating in them. That is the power of consumerism of American corporate culture: that we are addicted to it.

The Weak are Hurt Most

The consequences for our addictions is that the poor, the weak, and the sick are going to be trampled upon by our masters – the corporations. When we sin, we hurt pollute the natural world, the animals and our soil and water. There only defense is God's divine intervention. It is the only way to destroy the disease of sin, where it breeds. Our only liberation is through our choice to pray that the will of God happens, in our lives, as it does in Heaven.

Our Heads and in our Hearts

If we try our way out by science and technology, we will face the same problem within 50 years. The only way we will last to the next century is for us to turn to God. The underlying problem is not a war in the Heavens or on Earth, but the war in our hearts. We need to defeat our carnal self and empower our spiritual self, and that is the key to our survival on earth. We can only do this, by first submitting to God, in all areas of our lives.

3.4.4 Why So Negative?

Reasons

Sometimes my writing may appear negative, but there are good reasons for that. For one, writings is therapeutic for me and helps me accept the things that I cannot control in my life that causes my problems. Second, it is very hard to write something positive and uplifting or humorous. A third reason is that we live in very serious times.

Things are Going Well

What I want my readers to know is that most the most important things in my life are going very well and have been improving greatly each year for the last 10 years. I have learned a lot about myself, my illness, and what caused the major problems in the world today. My mental health has improved greatly as well as my independence. I have a great family and have enjoyed spending my time with them and sometimes I have been able to help them with some things. I have read about computers every day over the last 7 years and have increased my ability to fix or avoid problems as well as my ability to create better graphics and publish books. I have continued to do better financially each year and I have more money saved and my income is very secure.

3.5 Personal Religious Experience

3.5.1 Why am I a Christian?

Why My Experience is Unusual

I don't have the typical experience of being an unbeliever as a child and then accepting the Lord as my Saviour later in my life. I cannot remember exactly what was in my mind when I first asked the the Lord into my heart. I was only 4, but the following factors were likely in my mind, as soon as I could understand anything about myself.

Why I Began to Believe

There are four major factors in my decision to become born again and stay with the faith since then. Most importantly, I have always known that I needed help and the fact that needed it was much more obvious from my time in the military and since then. I wasn't a big leap to submit myself to God, because I hated arrogance more than anything else and understood why God placed the most importance on the ideal of humility. I never considered another faith as I knew that God was like how he was portrayed in the Christian bible, as I have a certain sensitivity to the spiritual things, and I could feel God's presence.

What Continued my Interest

And one of the things that has made me continue to be mentally, emotionally, and spiritually interested in the Bible is because of its complexity compared to other religious, philosophical, literary, and historical works of the greatest human thinkers. People are known to memorize the Koran and Buddhist Sutras, but I have never heard of a person who could conceivably memorize the entire Bible. The Bible is very simple and at the same time the greatest thinkers have struggled with even basic Christian doctrines (which is major reason why there are so many different denominations).

3.5.2 My Testimony

Life Events Were Unexpected

My life didn't turn out like I thought it would. But, I am very happy with my life how it is now. When you are young you believe that you can be a famous singer, actor, athlete, politician, or CEO. Later in life you realize that the main reason so little really changes even of things that everyone can agree with and don't require any sacrifice is that no one really wants change. Most people who get into power don't get there because they want to change the world, but rather are so willing to compromise and so

willing to do anything to fit in, that they have no vision and no integrity.

The Most Power

The wisest man knows that a father and a mother are the ones with the most power in the world. They may not change a lot of people's minds, but they have more impact on their children than anyone else will. And having kids is usually so easy that we usually go to great lengths to prevent it.

How to Make a Difference

The best way to improve the world is find what you are good at, find a skill you do that someone will pay you for, and use the latter to finance the former. You can tell you are doing the right thing when you have a lot of powerful opposition, you cannot reach many people, you cannot make any money off it, or that no one finds you relevant.

Failure of Greatest Thinkers

The best test of whether you will change the world will be by how much you are rejected in your generation. Confucius, Baha'ullah, Socrates, the Apostle Paul, Spinoza, Rousseau, Hume, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and many other major thinkers were failures during their lifetimes. Abraham Lincoln lost election after election, but never gave up. Van Gogh couldn't sell his paintings to pay for a meal.

What I had Planned

When I was in high school, I was interested in international relations and wanted to become a wealthy philanthropist in international marketing (the distribution part). Then I went into the military and after not being able to complete my enlistment and my failure in college business classes (I took accounting 5 times before I passed), I realized that what I was good at was writing. Before I had a chance to complete my schooling and find a career,

I was diagnosed with Paranoid Schizophrenia, and started out in the mental ward of the local private hospital and worked my way up to where I am now – living independently.

Biggest Influences

But the reason I am happy with my life is not just because I had been able to accept my illness easily, as I was glad I didn't have cancer like I thought and I got rid of chronic allergic pink eye with my first antipsychotic. My real success is because of the direct divine intervention of the Christian God and the ability of my family to accept and embrace me despite my illness and their willingness to continually and ability to effectively advocate for me.

Divine Intervention

From the placement of myself in a base that was not going to deployed to a war zone, was in the US, as well as in a command that was willing to let me go with an honorable discharge; to my diagnosis before I had committed any crimes, to my staying out of the hospital ever since I was diagnosed, to the fact that the newest medicines effectively treated my mental illness; and to my ability to be more independent every year, to my ability to understand abstract thought, to having the motivation to study the same things for 10 years after college all happened miraculously; because of God was looking over me and intervened directly on my behalf.

Family Influence

Most of the direction and inspiration in my writings came from things my sister, mother, father, grandmother, and uncles Clive and Jeff told me and set as an example by their actions as I grew up.

3.5.3 My Approach to Christianity

Paradox and the Bible

I believe in the miraculous of the Bible, plus the social gospel, as I do in every other major paradox of the Bible. Most my beliefs are based on paradoxes. Many people often consider paradoxes to be contradictions, but I use the term differently: I think of paradoxes are things, that are considered contradictory at first, but upon further examination, we realize that they are complimentary, like male and female. The most important paradox of Christianity is that Jesus Christ is the One Creator God eternally and also was fully human, while on earth (at the same time).

Paradox and Faith

The reason why I believe that faith is the most important aspect of understanding the Bible is because paradoxes are best understood with the heart instead of the mind. The Bible is not written, to communicate the exact same thing, to everyone and is designed, so that even the greatest theologians will never find a systematic way to explain it. The Bible was not meant to be argued rationally, but believed by those who are willing to place their hope in God, rather than their own minds and their own abilities. The biggest thing that God hates is an arrogant person and the more we are able to explain the natural world, through rational means, the bigger our egos get and the less we feel the need for God. At the same time, we realize the things we thought that we understood well, we knew less about than we thought.

The Apocalypse and the Environment

Many people have read the prophecy of the Bible and come to the conclusion that God is planning on destroying us, for no good reason. The irony of the situation is that we can see prophecy being fulfilled today and most of the plagues of the Bible are environmental disasters, that we created ourselves. God was not punishing us, but rather letting us feel the consequences, of our own greed

and arrogance. We have known for a while what was necessary to make the world livable, for our grandchildren and it has been proven to us in ways that we can understand, but no one cares enough, to give up any of our toys, so that we can save our future. We are so addicted to our gods (our brands), that we cannot cut back on our consumption, even if it would make life better, for all of us.

My Writing and Paradox

Many of my books are based on paradoxes like how: Muslims understand God the Father, Zen Buddhists and Bhakti Hindus understand the Holy Spirit, and African Christians understand Jesus Christ better than any church in North America and Europe does. I then talked about how the body and the mind are as important a component of a person and their relationship with society as the heart and the spirit, and how both eternal salvation and social justice are equally important. I also talked about how we can be encouraged and live in hope and strive to improve ourselves, even as our world is being destroyed, and how we should consider businesses and people to be just as important and how the rights of both Christians and Muslims should be equally respected.

3.6 Religion and the Church

3.6.1 What is the Best Church?

No Church is Perfect

There is no one perfect church or denomination. Evangelicals are good at sticking to their beliefs no matter what the obstacles, the Catholic church is great for its service, Mainline Protestants are good at social issues, and the Eastern Orthodox Church is great at its emphasis on mysticism. All churches are good at something and what you like about them will be different from me. No church is perfect in its theology and its commitment to living the Scriptures.

New Members

The things that I think is lacking in most churches are its commitment to new members and in making them feel welcome. It is hard to find a good church today, as they are so inward focused that they don't seem to care if someone new comes. Many churches are also bad at catering to young singles. Basically the church expects you to be out all weekend getting drunk, until you get married and have kids in your mid thirties.

Can't Agree with Any

The reason I don't go to church currently is because most churches I tried were too conservative politically and the liberal ones don't seem to have much commitment to Scripture. I just get angry at the conservative churches and don't feel any reason to go to the liberal ones. I like the Catholic Church because it combines both of the things I like about Evangelical and Mainline Protestant Churches. But I don't have the patience to go through a year long induction process. I also cannot agree with Catholic theology about Mary and the veneration of "saints".

The Bus Problem

The decisive thing is that the bus only comes one every hour on Sunday and that they often miss your stop, because they are too full, late, or just don't want to bother to stop. You then have to wait 2 hours and then you have to transfer and may have to wait an hour, for that as well and then do the same going back. You have to get to church really early and stay really long, to do it, which makes me very uncomfortable. And I heard they're cutting Sunday service totally with the bus now.

3.6.2 What About Sexual Morality?

Why Avoid It?

I do not talk about sexual morality, as it is explained in the Bible, because I believe that that is one of the things

other Christians have explained well. I have nothing to add to that. I like to write about things I know and things that are poorly understood as I have limited resources and don't feel the need to cover something, when I could not do any better myself at it. I am not going to cover every issue in the Bible, but I do believe that Biblical sexual ethics are important and should be followed.

What I Do Cover

I focus mainly on economic and environmental ethics and discipline, because I believe that these are not explained well or understood well from a Biblical point of view. I also focus on parts of the Bible that are not talked about as much and are not understood as well like the Prophets. I am confident that when people read the Bible, they will notice all the other issues described in the Bible, that I have not covered, and I don't think people will miss or have trouble interpreting Scripture related to sexual ethics.

3.6.3 Why Don't I Work with Others?

I Appeal to a Small Group

My experiences working in a team is that I do all the work and everyone else gets credit for it. The Humanities approach has fallen out of favor in the 20th century and Science and Social Science have dominated the field, in my lifetime. I also have a unique perspective on my study of religion, which would make it hard to find someone doing something compatible. Christians don't like what I do, because I am liberal in my politics and am willing to study other religions and points of view. And non-Christians don't like my adherence to Christian morals and my unwillingness to include pagan, animistic, and occult writings and practices.

Few Would Respond

I would love to inspire someone else to be a philosopher, but I wouldn't want consider them as a successor if they

adopted my philosophy or mainstream views and I would not consider anyone to be inspired by me who takes part in occult practices or study occult writings. I truly do walk the path less traveled and few people are interested in the study of philosophy or even are willing to read about anything, even things they agree with. I do still want more people to become Christians, even though I don't want anyone to feel pressured into it, because I believe that Christianity is a superior religion, but I believe that the Bible speaks for itself and does not need to be defended.

3.6.4 Why are Christians so Mean?

Probably because they are not genuine believers. Genuine Christians make mistakes, but they have the right attitude before God. You can tell by a person's actions, more than by their words what they believe. Genuine Christians exhibit the fruits of the spirit.

Fruits of Righteousness (or Fruits of the Spirit)

Psalms

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Isaiah

Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly. The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful. For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. The instruments also of the churl are evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right. But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand. Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech. Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women: for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come. Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones: strip you, and make you bare, and gird sackcloth upon your loins. They shall lament for the teats, for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine. Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briars; yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city: Because the palaces shall be forsaken; the multitude of the city shall be left; the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks; Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruit-

ful field be counted for a forest. Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places; When it shall hail, coming down on the forest; and the city shall be low in a low place. Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass.

2

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee. Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are

²Isaiah 32

your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

3

Luke

A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might

³Isaiah 55

not see, and hearing they might not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light. For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad. Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

4

John

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no

⁴Luke 8:5-18

more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will

keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

5

2 Corinthians

But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;) Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the

⁵John 15

saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

6

Galatians

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

7

Colossians

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother, To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth: As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ; Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit. For this cause we also, since the

⁶2 Corinthians 9:6-12

⁷Galatians 5:22-26

day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister; Who now rejoice in my

sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

8

James

My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is

⁸Colossians 1

tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

9

2 Peter

Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called

⁹James 3

us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him

in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

10

3.7 Christian Theology

3.7.1 The Covenant with God

New Testament and Old Testament God

Many people say they like the God of the Old Testament or the God of the New Testament and many people, even Christians, see these as opposing points of view and have a hard time reconciling them. One of the ways of understanding Scripture is the idea of progressive revelation, like in Mayana Buddhism, where God reveals more about Himself, over time. Many people think the Old Testament God was really repressive and that the New Testament God was very lenient and forgiving, but in reality it was the same God and the same moral standard.

Evolution of the Covenants

The New Testament and the Old Testament are named, after the 2 covenants God made, with man. The first was made with Abraham, renewed with Moses, and the Prophets. We learn later on in the Psalms and the Prophets that God does not delight, in the ceremonies He prescribed for people's forgiveness, but rather desired people, to make a genuine change of heart. We find out later on that all

¹⁰ 2 Peter 1

the commandments, summarized in the 10 Commandments, that would never be changed, until Jesus comes back again in glory, were about loving God, with all our heart and loving our neighbor, as ourselves.

Spiritual Realities

Throughout prophecy, we learn that idolatry and adultery are related and in the New Testament, we are told we either serve God or money, and in the Apocalypse, there will only be 2 options: serve God or serve the false gods. God judges people differently, who have heard about Him and made a commitment or covenant with Him and those who are ignorant of this. God takes loyalty to Him, as the most important thing, and the Bible teaches how serving God is the same, as loving others and doing good.

Being Christian = Being Kind

Not only were the pagan cultures of Biblical times worshiping false gods, but they were treating their people bad as well. The Bible connects your relationship with God, with your level of morality. As Christians mature, they are provided proof of their faith, in the way that they act. Being a committed Christian is supposed to be the same as being a kind person. We are in constant battle, between our spiritual and our carnal selves, and when we sin, our carnal self is in control and we are violating God's laws. Christians do continue to sin, but they should sin less and less, as they mature. If a Christian fails, to try to reform themselves, then the Bible basically says they are not real believers.

Exodus 34:

1 And the LORD said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. 2 And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount. 3 And no man shall

come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount. 4 And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone. 5 And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. 6 And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 7 Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. 8 And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped. 9 And he said, If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiffnecked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance. 10 And he said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the LORD: for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee. 11 Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. 12 Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee: 13 But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves: 14 For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: 15 Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; 16 And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods. 17 Thou shalt make thee no molten gods.

18 The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee, in the time of the month Abib: for in the month Abib thou camest out from Egypt. 19 All that openeth the matrix is mine; and every firstling among thy cattle, whether ox or sheep, that is male. 20 But the firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb: and if thou redeem him not, then shalt thou break his neck. All the firstborn of thy sons thou shalt redeem. And none shall appear before me empty. 21 Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest. 22 And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's end. 23 Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Israel. 24 For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God thrice in the year. 25 Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover be left unto the morning. 26 The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk. 27 And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. 28 And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments. 29 And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. 30 And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. 31 And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them. 32 And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in mount

Sinai. 33 And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face. 34 But when Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he took the vail off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. 35 And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone: and Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

Deuteronomy 29:

1 These are the words of the covenant, which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb. 2 And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land; 3 The great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles: 4 Yet the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day. 5 And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot. 6 Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink: that ye might know that I am the LORD your God. 7 And when ye came unto this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, came out against us unto battle, and we smote them: 8 And we took their land, and gave it for an inheritance unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half tribe of Manasseh. 9 Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do. 10 Ye stand this day all of you before the LORD your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, 11 Your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water: 12 That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and into his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day: 13 That he may establish thee to day for a people unto himself, and

that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. 14 Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath; 15 But with him that standeth here with us this day before the LORD our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day: 16 (For ye know how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt; and how we came through the nations which ye passed by; 17 And ye have seen their abominations, and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which were among them:) 18 Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood; 19 And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: 20 The LORD will not spare him, but then the anger of the LORD and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven. 21 And the LORD shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the law: 22 So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the LORD hath laid upon it; 23 And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath: 24 Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger? 25 Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt: 26 For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew

not, and whom he had not given unto them: 27 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book: 28 And the LORD rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day. 29 The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

Jeremiah 34:

1 The word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all his army, and all the kingdoms of the earth of his dominion, and all the people, fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities thereof, saying, 2 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah, and tell him, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire: 3 And thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but shalt surely be taken, and delivered into his hand; and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon. 4 Yet hear the word of the LORD, O Zedekiah king of Judah; Thus saith the LORD of thee, Thou shalt not die by the sword: 5 But thou shalt die in peace: and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which were before thee, so shall they burn odours for thee; and they will lament thee, saying, Ah lord! for I have pronounced the word, saith the LORD. 6 Then Jeremiah the prophet spake all these words unto Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem, 7 When the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish, and against Azekah: for these defenced cities remained of the cities of Judah. 8 This is the word that came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, after that the king Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people which were at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty unto them; 9 That every man should let his manservant, and every man his maid-

servant, being an Hebrew or an Hebrewess, go free; that none should serve himself of them, to wit, of a Jew his brother. 10 Now when all the princes, and all the people, which had entered into the covenant, heard that every one should let his manservant, and every one his maid-servant, go free, that none should serve themselves of them any more, then they obeyed, and let them go. 11 But afterward they turned, and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection for servants and for handmaids. 12 Therefore the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, 13 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondmen, saying, 14 At the end of seven years let ye go every man his brother an Hebrew, which hath been sold unto thee; and when he hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee: but your fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their ear. 15 And ye were now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye had made a covenant before me in the house which is called by my name: 16 But ye turned and polluted my name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom ye had set at liberty at their pleasure, to return, and brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids. 17 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the LORD, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. 18 And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof, 19 The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf; 20 I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that

seek their life: and their dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth. 21 And Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes will I give into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which are gone up from you. 22 Behold, I will command, saith the LORD, and cause them to return to this city; and they shall fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire: and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without an inhabitant.

Hebrews 1:

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; 4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. 5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? 6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. 7 And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. 8 But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. 9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. 10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: 11 They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; 12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. 13 But to which of the angels said

he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? 14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Hebrews 2:

1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. 2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; 3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; 4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? 5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. 6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? 7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: 8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. 9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. 13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. 14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise

took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. 16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. 17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Hebrews 3:

1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; 2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. 3 For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. 4 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. 5 And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; 6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. 7 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, 8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. 10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. 11 So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) 12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. 13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; 15 While it is said, To day

if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. 16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. 17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

Hebrews 4:

1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. 2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. 3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. 5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest. 6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: 7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. 8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. 9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. 10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. 11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. 12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. 14 Seeing then that we

have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. 15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 5:

1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: 2 Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. 3 And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. 4 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. 5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. 6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. 7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; 8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; 10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec. 11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. 12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

3.7.2 Central Biblical Paradox

Faith Alone Plus Good Works

One of the major paradoxes, in Christianity, that has split the church, is over salvation being by faith alone and at the same time having proof, for your faith, through your changed attitude and behavior. Scripture states that no one is good but God. Man is born spiritually and morally corrupt, in his core self. Even Christians have this problem too. But at the same time, Christians need to prove their faith, by their good work. A simple way to resolve this paradox is to realize, that when we do good, as Christians, that it is a combination of our choice and God's supernatural intervention, that makes this possible.

How Salvation Works

Just as God is almost entirely responsible for our salvation and all He asks of us to admit we have disobeyed His laws, that we are not deserving of anything, and we accept His authority in our life, the vast length of the separation from God is bridged by God's unconditional grace and forgiveness. God is perfect and cannot tolerate injustice, so He came to earth, in human form (while still remaining God and being perfect in morality), to sacrifice Himself, as Jesus Christ, so that our failures in following His laws and our arrogance, for attempting to try to be good, without God and erecting our own corrupt attempt, at moral standards, in contradiction of God's laws can be overcome (by God's sacrifice of Himself and the taking on the penalty of our misdeeds).

How Both Can Be True

So the way in which we can do good, as Christians, is almost entirely because of God's grace and very little is because of our effort. We can be good, while fallen, because, as Christians, we are submitting ourselves to Jesus Christ and letting him take control of our lives. Christians can be good and at the same time fallen, because we have not given over all of our life to God, and as we grow, we hand

over more and more aspects of our lives, to our Lord Jesus Christ. A genuine Christian should grow in this way, so that even though he does good things, who he is is still a sinner and a fallen individual. So Christians are both fallen and should have good deeds at the same time. Both are true and denying either one is not Biblical.

3.7.3 Advantages and Dangers of Mysticism

Different Types of Mysticism

Mysticism is often used very vaguely and has many different meanings for different people. The essential meaning of mysticism that almost everyone can agree upon is mystery. Mysticism can be as different as Evangelical Christianity is from occult religions (occult means hidden and the Bible refers to those who do things ungodly as doing so in a secret way, because they are ashamed of it). There is nothing orthodox or unorthodox about mysticism in Christianity. Modern Christian mysticism seems to be most common in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, although modern Evangelical theology can be seen as very mystical as well.

Roman Catholic Approach

One of the big things that has kept me from becoming Roman Catholic, besides the year long commitment to the process of joining, is that it is common for Roman Catholics to pray to “saints” and there is special reverence for Mary, Mother of Jesus that I cannot find Biblical support for. In Latin America, names of Christian “Saints” are often used in the practice of pre-Christian animism and have confused many people as to what Christianity is all about. Christianity is not like the ancient Roman practice of just renaming all the Greek gods. The Christian God is totally different in values/morality, position of authority, attributes, relationship to people, and almost everything else that constitutes a given spirit or person.

Eastern Orthodox Approach

I like the importance placed in the Eastern Orthodox church on the Jesus Prayer and on the mystical instead of rational approach to Scripture. The idea that one can experience a spiritual connection with God, beyond what is described in the Bible, of how we are instructed how to relate to God, is hard for me to reconcile with scripture. I know that this practice is not the same as a person becoming one with God, in the sense that they achieve the same level spiritually, but I think it is problematic and I think that it requires too elaborate an explanation, that could so easily cause confusion, to people who are spiritually immature.

Paradox and Faith

Paradox is one of the major philosophical concepts of mysticism. The way in which I see the Bible as mystical relates more to how Kierkegaard sees the paradox of Jesus Christ's existence and our relationship with Him as was described in the new Testament, especially in the Apostle Paul's letters to the various early Christian churches. The belief that Jesus was both man and God is a paradox and must be accepted by faith, not reason and in our relationship with God should be one of humility, in reverence to the reality, of who God is and our proper response to who He is.

Christ and Salvation

So important is humility, that I agree with Kierkegaard, that when we are farthest from God, because of sin, we are actually closer, by way of grace. The most important thing in faith is humility, as that is what God wants most of us, because that is essentially what the process of repentance and salvation is about. God realized that no one of us could ever be anywhere good enough to earn our way to God, so Jesus decided to save us by grace and to forgive our sins by his own sacrifice. In salvation, God's grace and sacrifice reach out to us and all we do is accept his offer with the appropriate respect.

Our Relationship with God

This isn't to say that sin is preferable, but only that our obvious failure increases our realization of how much we rely upon God's grace. And humility before God is not a matter of debasement, but really just an acceptance of a reality we can only partially imagine and understand more fully by faith and through God's grace. Think about it this way: even though every human is equal in worth, because God both created and redeemed all of us on His own; any number compared to infinity is zero. No matter how great we are or how moral we are, we are nothing in comparison to the Christian God. God is not a mere spirit, but rather is infinitely greater than anything that could possibly be created or imagined by Him or anyone else over all of eternity.

3.8 Religion and Politics

3.8.1 Losing Our Souls

What We are Taught

We are taught to specialize in narrow way of thinking and compartmentalize religion, science, history, and art. We are taught to substitute facts for truth and math for faith. We substitute current event soundbites for our understanding of history and substitute fashion for our vision of art. We lose our souls and learn to compromise in public schools. The youthful enthusiasm we have for new ideas and change is directed towards conformance to our peers and the trends started by our manufacture heroes: musicians, actors, models, and athletes.

What We Believe

All our desires to resist what our parents taught us are channeled into an addiction to consumption and materialism. We challenge ourselves in how much alike we can be and compete for the attention of those who epitomize a narrow and unrealistic view of the ideal opposite sex. We

seek our happiness through our consumption of entertainment, that we passively view, without critical thought or consideration of the effort involved in its creation. We just expect to live the fairy tale life, that we see in the movies and music videos, even though the rich and famous are not satisfied by that either.

3.8.2 Why America Needs God

We Need Values

America needs God now more than ever. America needs the Christian God, who is superior to the other gods, because God provides all the things we need to have values and behave morally. A code of ethics tells us what we must do, religion gives us a reason why, and the Christian God gives us the power to do so. We in America are so enamored by our games and entertainment pastimes, that we have forgotten that the most important aspect of life is spiritual. We are not going to be able to be rich, while trading our economic, political, and social future, for a fun time now.

At the End of our Wealth

We have spent all we can and borrowed as much as others will lend us. We have gone through: our natural resources, our financial resources, and our human resources. We have nothing to sell the rest of the world, that they want or need and we cannot afford to buy, what the rest of the world wants to sell us. We are bringing down the entire world economy and the third world will be hit hardest of all. We need to understand what position we are in today, to get the motivation to improve ourselves, so that we can have a future.

There is Much Work to Do

We need to do a lot of things at once. We need to start investing in our future: by getting more education, by learning to save money, by learning manners and how to treat

people fairly, and we don't have time to waste. At the same time our country needs to: stop fighting expensive wars overseas that will never be resolved, stop wasting our limited natural resources like coal and oil before we have none left, we need to rebuild our infrastructure, invest in educating people in things that will get them jobs that pay enough to support a family, secure our borders so that criminals don't get in and out of the country without our knowledge or consent, find a way to constructively employ those who are unemployed and not able to find new jobs, and clean up our environment and build infrastructure to deal with the economic, social, and technological problems caused by our over consumption of natural resources.

We Need to Conserve

Our economy has permanently contracted, while our population continues to grow and our grandparents have lost their retirement savings and are now trying to find jobs as well. We need to find a way to continue to advance technology, while, at the same time, still keeping jobs for the average person. It does no good to save so much money on plastic junk, when we have only been able to do so at the cost of our jobs. We need to find a way to get by with: less energy, less money, and less technology. We need to revert to a much earlier century in our use of energy, or else we will have a mass die off of the human population.

3.8.3 The Church and Education

History of Scholarship

The Church in its various flavors has traditionally been at the forefront of education: the Renaissance and the Cyrillic family of Slavic languages were started by Eastern Orthodox monks, the golden age of the Islamic world was started by Jacobite and Nestorian Christians, and the Catholic church helped preserve and advance the written works of the pagan and Christian worlds for centuries.

When Protestant Christians went overseas as missionaries, they translated the Bible into the native language of the local people and even created written languages, if there was none to start with, and founded some of the best educational systems, in the countries they had missions and they are still alive today.

Why Christians have Rejected Academia

The rise of the Evangelical branch of Christianity seems to not place the same emphasis on education. Some of the major reasons may be that: a lot of the academic world is trying to push the idea that white Christian males caused all the world's problems, many Christians in the academic community are trying to push a Christianity that is not Biblical in its theology, academia constantly argues against all of the miracles in the Bible by trying to explain them scientifically, and academia seems to have accepted Darwinian evolution, life being formed by chance, and an old Earth theory as a gospel truth.

Christians Should do What is Right

But my belief is that we should only oppose things that are wrong morally or contrary to the Bible, so I think the push for Christians should be to do what is right, instead of just doing the opposite of the unbelievers. Just because many pagans are trying to help the environment doesn't mean that Christians shouldn't do so as well. Just because atheists dominate Science doesn't mean that we should give up on creationism. Just because many in academia have argued against imperialism and colonialism doesn't mean that Christians cannot embrace this idea as well, but explain how it is rationalism and a lack of spiritual values that caused this problem to get exponentially worse.

Christians Need to Take a Stand

Christians need to bring Biblical values back into the educational system and fight for the future of our culture. Christians should not be afraid to challenge secu-

lar beliefs, just because they are popular and assumed to be true by the majority. Christians need to show how academia's beliefs in things that contradict the Bible are not the result of letting the evidence lead to the truth, but rather that much of academia just assumes things to be true, because they don't have the moral fiber, to stand up for the truth. Christians should not be afraid to have an opinion or to use Scripture to support their views, in the non-Christian world.

The Battle is Spiritual

Christians need not fear that they will be rejected or lose funding, because God will back them up. Christians need to realize that the future of education of young people is a spiritual battle and when they find opposition to realize that there are spiritual forces behind this. The best thing Christians can do is keep the right attitude before God, pray for God's will to be done, live as moral a life as possible, and keep reading Scripture for answers to our problems. The only thing Christians should be afraid of as being able to defeat them is their own addiction to sin and unwillingness to submit their lives to God. The real battle is in our minds and our greatest enemy is our carnal self.

3.9 Secular Philosophy

3.9.1 Rationalism in Philosophy

What is Rational?

People often use the word “rational” in contemporary speech, to describe doing things that are sensible and well thought out, but rational means something completely different in philosophy. Rational philosophy is often described as diametrically opposed to faith or mysticism. Having faith in something, if it is real, makes sense, but is not always called “rational,” because that word in philosophy is usually used to refer to using empirical evidence, to support a

claim about something, that can be tested in a lab and is part of the natural world.

Spirituality is Worthwhile

A lot of things in life cannot be proven Scientifically, so that they are sometimes referred to as irrational. This is because the spiritual aspects of life can only be fully understood by faith, in what is not a physical or mathematically understood reality. There are a number of reasons for believing in spiritual things: values like love or honor, the motivation to do something because it is believed to be the right thing, and choosing to sacrifice yourself for something greater are all spiritual things, cannot be explained through Science, but are still very important.

3.9.2 Do Atheists Have Values?

Definition of Atheism

Atheism basically mean not theistic or not believing in a God or other deities. Most of the people that do not believe in God in the West probably are doing so, because they don't want to follow rules. You could call that a value too, because values or ethics can be any system that is consistent. For instance, Christianity by the example of Christ has the values of humility and compassion.

Nietzsche

Nietzsche has a very different set of ethics. Nietzschean ethics are based on the pre-Socratic philosophers (the Greek philosophers before Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle) and Greek paganism. Nietzsche values strength and beauty primarily and he is very passionate and committed to his beliefs. If the majority of Christians had the same passion for their beliefs, then there would be much less to criticize in how Christianity is commonly practiced today. I share with Nietzsche the idea that I do not want any followers.

Anarchy

For people that do not want to follow any rules are often categorized as Anarchists, but I think the real issue that defines Anarchists, from others who reject the establishment, is that Anarchists do not respect private property, because they feel it was gained through deception and violence. I am not an Anarchist, because I am Christian and the Bible has rules against destruction of private property, even if it is gained dishonestly.

Major Atheistic Philosophies

There are many other Atheistic codes of ethics or complete philosophies including: Existentialism, Postmodernism, and the most famous of all – the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment was based on the ideas of the major Greek and Roman philosophers and culture and was about the free exchange of ideas and the idea of a culture and a government founded on reason and the rule of law, instead of on faith and obedience. Rousseau believed that people were good naturally and that evil was a learned behavior. The biggest new ideas of the Enlightenment were Science and the Social Sciences.

The Enlightenment

Hegel was famous for uniting the two major schools of the Enlightenment, called British Empiricism and Continental Rationalism. Empiricism was based on using empirical evidence to find truth and Rationalism was based on the idea that there is an “a priori” statement that everything else is discovered from. Descartes’ a priori was “I think therefore I am”. Hegel based his ideas on an elaborate system that made extensive use of the concept of paradox. Hegel’s philosophy was part of a school called phenomenology, which is very hard to explain or understand.

Existentialism

Kierkegaard and later Existentialists usually agreed that they were against any kind of system used to explain

the unique qualities of human being (or existence). Existentialism started out Christian, but some of the most famous Existentialists like Sartre and Heidegger were Atheists. Postmodernism is a reaction against the Enlightenment's belief in absolute values, but still embraces Science and reason, as the source of truth.

Variations of Atheism

Atheism is also a very general category, that involves many variations on the lack of belief in a God (a belief in a God or gods is also known as religion). There are at least dozens of variations and the most common is the Agnostic variation, which people claim, who have not decided whether or not they believe in God. Science is the best known philosophy which is designed on a kind of Agnosticism towards evidence and reason.

3.10 Religious Issues

3.10.1 Philosophy and Religion

Philosophy is Going Beyond the Basics

So you already have a religion and you wonder why you need philosophy. Philosophy is to religion, as math is to science. You can be born again and have eternal life without learning much about philosophy, but if you are the kind of person that just does the basic to get by, than all means don't bother. You don't even have to be literate, to be born again. Many people get by without the most basic understanding of math or science.

Philosophy is not for Most People

Not everyone has time to learn about everything in depth. Philosophy is not for everyone. Society needs many more engineers, than it needs philosophers. But if you don't want to learn about philosophy, because you already have done the bare minimum for you religion, then you might at least want to re-examine your attitude, as it will not

get you far in life. Doing the bare minimum will keep you at a boring, unfulfilling job, for the rest of your life.

What Kind of Person are You?

Philosophy is for those who want to get more out of life, for people who know life is short and they want to discover what is most important in life. They want to understand why things are the way they are and what they can do to change things. Philosophy is for people who cannot live life without examining themselves and their place in the universe. Philosophy is for people who cannot be satisfied, by a one sentence answer. Philosophy is for people who enjoy thinking and learning.

3.10.2 Popular Misconceptions about Philosophy and Religion

Just as with any other topic, in philosophy and religion the same word can have more than one meaning and most people have an inaccurate perception of the way things work. Just like in computers, the popular sound bites are based on people writing about something that they have not read enough about and many people who do know enough about it have agendas and are trying to push a certain viewpoint (which they have no problem compromising the facts in order to do so).

The bulk of my books are used to explain how different things like Christianity, Existentialism, Taoism, Mysticism, Paradox, Liberal, and other terms are used incorrectly or have alternate meanings (that are different from what people imagine them to have). These inaccurate conceptions are the result of faulty common knowledge and the oversimplification of writers.

One very widely held misconception about Eastern Philosophy from the Christian community is that it is somehow related to the New Age movement and so is incompatible with Christianity. The reality is that Christianity has already been synchronized with Greek Philosophy and Paganism, which has kept the Christian community divided, because of a lack of understanding of para-

dox (which is the basis for most Biblical theology). The New Age movement has taken things from every religion and has taken as much from Christianity as it has from Eastern Philosophy and what it has taken from Eastern philosophy does not include the ethics or emphasis on discipline, which are the most important parts.

3.10.3 The Kind of Christianity I am Promoting

I do not wish to change the theology of Christianity: I take both sides of most divisions in the church in theology. I believe that Jesus was a man and eternally is God, that salvation is by faith alone and still by faith plus works, that Free Will and Predestination are both true, and that Jesus came at the end of the 1st century AD and will come in the future at the same “time”.

What I do wish to change is everything else. I do wish to change the philosophical, political, artistic, generational, regional, organizational, and perceived opposition aspects of the way Christianity is practiced in America. Philosophically, I wish to bring the church in America to a mystical and existential Christian approach to Scripture. Politically, I wish to bring a fiscally liberal approach to Scripture to the church in America. Artistically, I wish to bring a multi-cultural approach to Scripture to the church in America. Generationally, I wish to move the focus onto the generations succeeding the baby boomers, to the church in America. Regionally, I wish to bring a developing world center of gravity and approach to Scripture to the church in America. Organizationally, I wish to have the church in America organized by network, instead of top down and linear. Finally, I wish to move the focus on threats to the church from Atheism to Paganism.

3.10.4 Another Perspective on Orthodoxy

For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them

that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

11

Some would say that I have an more open view of what is acceptable for Christians, but in reality I just have a different view of what is orthodox and Biblical and what is not. I am really hesitant to learn anything

¹¹1 Corinthians 1:17-31

about spiritual warfare or the occult especially from non-Christian sources.

One of the reasons why I have studied about Asia so predominantly is because I am interested in other cultures but I didn't want to get involved in or learn too much about Animism which is an important part of many ancient African and Latin American cultures.

I also believe that the Church has been synchronistic in its use of Greek philosophy and religion in the development of Christian doctrines and the the study of Scripture. The warning against that comes from the first part of 1 Corinthians before the Apostle Paul starts to talk about sex and is quoted above.

The Bible is fundamentally Asian and makes more sense and is more accurately interpreted if thought of from a traditional Asian worldview. A good way to get this point of view is by reading classical texts in Asian philosophy, literature, and religion.

I also do my best to avoid learning about mythology other than the specifically Christian-based Tolkien view on English mythology.

3.10.5 Rich White Men

Some people have assumed when I refer to “rich white men” that I am talking about community leaders or small business men. This is totally not true. When I talk about “rich white men”, I am referring to, at the most, a few thousand people who control most of what goes on in the world. I am referring to organizations like the Council on Foreign Relations or 33rd degree Freemasons and similar groups.

I believe that these kinds of secret societies are pushing for a one world government and are pushing the ideology of the New Age movement and are supportive of an occult worldview. This sounds like a conspiracy theory, but there is little secret about these groups’ objectives.

I believe that the Theosophy movement was one of the early organized efforts to bring about these objectives. I believe that this is also a white male dominated group who are principally English and American in nationality.

The methods of these groups consist mostly of starting big wars to shift the balance of power in the world and have infiltrated public education and the media to promote the occult and a one world dictatorship. I believe that all of the national leaders of most world powers and anyone else who has a chance at winning an election at that level are supportive of these objectives or realize that they do not have the power to work against this movement.

Either way, no one consequential in world politics is working against this effort and many are willing participants. I do not believe that we really have a democracy in America, but rather that people's souls are owned by the media and public education, so that there is no effective resistance to this effort politically, economically, or socially.

3.11 The Bible and Making Decisions

3.11.1 What Defines Us

It is common to see human development as either or both nature and/or nurture, but the most important factor that influences your quality of life is your decisions. One of the reason why Existentialism is so relevant today and is so universally important is that the true thing that defines humanity is free will. Our wills are the most important elements of what defines what is important in life and form the most integral part of our identity. We actually start out as a mostly blank slate, but we form our individuality by the choices we make.

This doesn't change the fact that we are not born into equally difficult circumstances nor are we born with equal abilities or health, but we can choose the direction that we take in life, even if we cannot determine our future to the extent we hope for. Many people start with some great limitations in life, but because of the choices they make, they become a genuine person that is trying to make the world a better place. No matter how wealthy or

how popular a family you are born into, if you make bad choices, you will end up in a bad place and your life will get worse and worse.

Even if you came from a bad home or had parents who didn't learn from their parents how to raise kids, you can improve your attitude and the kind of person you are. Whether you are wealthy or not does not make your life better if you are not able to be happy when you are alone. No matter how many rules you get a way with breaking or how lenient society becomes in enforcing laws, your true freedom comes from your ability to make up your own mind about who you want to be.

3.11.2 What Does Freedom Mean?

An Summary of the Biblical Concept

Most people think of freedom as the ability to choose what they want to do. The irony is that most people are driven by the desire for pleasure, actually become addicted to sin, and end up destroying themselves, as a direct result of their free choices. It is ironic that so many Americans died for their citizens to experience freedom and yet most Americans are so desperate to belong to a social group that they make the exact same choices as everyone else.

As you can now see, theoretical freedom is not the same as real freedom, because our greatest enemy is ourselves and our own selfishness. The Bible talks about how we are slaves to our own greed and that to be free is to be adopted back in to God's family, being reconciled with our Creator, and being forgiven for our mistakes. Freedom is only achieved by understanding the concept of sin, realizing that some choices lead to destruction, and then accept that we must submit ourselves to Christ in order to be truly free.

We have one of two masters: we serve money (the devil) or God. We cannot keep from choosing sides. If we don't make the decision to repent of our sins, then we are making the choice to continue in sin and we will be in servitude to a master, who want us to have no freedom. There are many times in which there are multiple

decisions we can make and none are bad decisions. Life does not allow simple choices very often and even simple choices can be hard to make. But for us to know the truth about our relationship with God is the starting point in which we can fight against our greatest enemy, our stubborn will.

Being free is related to being humble. This is a paradox that few understand. There is no freedom in an addiction and if we live to satisfy our desires, we will never be happy or at peace with ourselves. The only path to freedom must begin with acknowledging that we cannot be free, with no commitment to God. Being free is really about accepting that we cannot be happy on our own. We need to go back to the relationship we have all been estranged from. We must come back to our Heavenly Father with respect and humility. Grace is the route to freedom and it is given freely. We just need to accept the reality as it is.

Passages that Talk about Biblical Freedom

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

12

Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

¹²Psalm 51:12

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of

¹³John 8:31-36

sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

14

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal

¹⁴Romans 6

mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan

within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor prin-

palities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

15

3.11.3 The Biblical Approach to Suffering

Western vs. Non-Western Attitudes

To many Western Christians, passages about prophecy and about how suffering builds character make God seem like a sadist or a masochist. But in Africa, Revelations is the most popular book of the Bible. Why do different cultures see things so differently and how can talking about suffering be positive?

Who is Responsible?

I must first assure to you that God is not responsible for our suffering and neither is the devil. God restricts what the devil can do to us (like we read about in Job) because God wants us to be responsible for our actions and have a free will, so that we can choose our own destiny. The part that doesn't make sense is that good people suffer because of what bad people have done and the bad people often live without any ill effects.

Encouraging People Who Suffer

So the point of talking about the suffering we will have is not to say that it is worthwhile nor even ok that we suffer, nor is to scare us about the future, but rather to communicate to those who are already suffering, that it is not for nothing. In other words, it is to encourage us. I think, for many in the West, we are relatively rich and do not suffer physically anywhere near like it is in the Third World, so we misinterpret prophecy about the future as some sort of punishment, for us who believe.

¹⁵Romans 8

Environment and Prophecy

We are learning now about the world, things that were prophesied to happen at the end of time. These birth pains are already occurring, which we label as environmental disasters. These we have caused, because of our own lust, selfishness, and sin.

Understanding God's People

This goes back again to what it means to be a Christian and what group of people Christ has targeted for His Kingdom: Christianity is a religion for the materially poor and the spiritually rich. We will never understand who Christ is, until we understand what the majority of the Christians in the world, throughout history or even now, are like in their circumstances and in their spiritual make up.

3.11.4 Heaven, Eternity, and God

Eternal Perspective

I have thought about what Heaven might be like, for a long time. Time would obviously be different, if we are to live forever, so that we don't need to have an endless list of things to do. I think we see part of this in Taoist writings, and when we get very good at something, we are in the process of performing the action, and we are in the moment or in the flow, time goes by at a different rate. Compare kissing your girlfriend or wife with getting your hand burned: in one situation, time goes by faster than in the other situation. I think one of the reasons why God still sees us as sinners, even if we have repented many years ago, is because for God, everything happens at once (this is really a vast oversimplification), so God sees everything we have ever done as the real us, instead of what we are at an given time.

Roses and Heaven

I took some close-up pictures of some roses, while visiting my parents, and they were so perfect and beautiful that

they gave my a feeling of peace, joy, and awe. The roses remind me of how I imagine Heaven. At the end of the Book of Revelations, Heaven is described as a golden city, with precious jewels and a garden. I used to think that this seemed inconsistent with how God speaks in support of values, instead of material wealth, throughout the rest of the Bible.

Indian Mystic Poets

But I remember reading some of the writings of South Indian Mystic Poets and how there is a branch of the Bahkti Hindu movement (this is a movement based on the devotional path of Hinduism) that believes God cannot be explained and so can only be talked about in mystical terms. This school believes similarly to how Moses Maimonides talked about how God can only be described in terms of what He is not, instead of what He is. God is not finite, He is not mortal, He is not defeatable, God was not created, and He is not limited by anything. The Indian mystic poets that believe this way, include some of the most famous: Kabir, Guru Nanak, and Meera. But this other school of the Bhakti movement understands God as a celebration and that living a spiritual life is one of splendor and rich in spiritual qualities.

Understanding Revelations

Revelations starts out as a very scary horror film or nightmare scenario. We read this book of the Bible and are terrified of ever having to live through this, but throughout most of the history of the Church, Christians have found comfort in reading Revelations, because it gives them hope. Have you ever gone on a camping trip? How did you feel when you came home, took a shower and then slept in your own bed? Have you ever had a hard workout on a very hot day? What did you feel when you got to drink a cold drink? That is what Heaven is like. Heaven is about comforting us after all we have suffered in our lives. We will truly appreciate it, after all we have been through in our lives.

3.11.5 What We Should Do

Many Christians believe that there is one specific job they must do and that they need to figure this out or they are not following God's will. If you want to know what God expects of us, read the Psalms and the Prophets. God does not require us to know anything that is not in the Bible. It is not likely that God or an angel will come and give you a vision of an exact job God wants you to do, but if God wants you to do something, you will have no doubts about it. All roads will lead to it and you will be reminded of it all the time, no matter what you do or where you go.

God's will for us is not something hard to figure out. God also treats us all equally. God wants us to be a certain kind of person, rather than doing a certain kind of job. God wants us to have a good attitude and to try to follow in Christ's example of humility and compassion. The qualities God want us to emulate are abstract values, not specific actions.

Jesus says it with the Sermon on the Mount and the Golden Rule. He says the same in the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament. What God wants you to do is to use your natural gifts with a passion for who Jesus is. If you believe for a long time that something is important and the Bible doesn't speak against it, then if you do it, then you are following God.

3.12 Thinking Long Term

3.12.1 My Perspective

Although I believe that it is impossible for anyone to be objective but God, I can assure you that I have no financial interests in anything I write on, because I am a disabled veteran and make all my money because of my disability, regardless of what I do or do not do, and I cannot receive extra money from any other source and keep my pension. This website has never made me any money nor ever will (although it has cost me a lot) and all my books are sold at cost.

When you read my books, you will realize that I am not interested in pushing any particular ideology, except for people to think for themselves and think more broadly. I believe and practice everything I say and my main aim is to improve the quality of life of people and animals. I also do not write anything unless I already have done a great deal more research than most people would before writing about any particular topic.

Another unique element of my perspective is that I see the world as bigger than myself. If some change in the world would make other people's lives better at the expense of or with no direct effect to me, I would welcome it.

Take for example software and computers. Although I don't play games on computers, I still see the value in it, because games accelerate the investment in the graphical processing power of computer chips, which will in turn allow me to improve the quality of my graphics. Even though I don't have an iPod, people buying iPods makes my computer experience and what I can create with it better, because Apple can invest more in computers. The success of mobile computing, although I am not very interested in that in itself, is good because it gets more standards compliant browsers out there, that allow web sites to be designed easier and with more features.

I also see things from a longer period of time than most people. Governments think the farthest ahead and that is only a generation at the most. I am planning hundreds of years ahead of time. I don't form my perspective on what exists currently, but on what could be very important long into the future. That is why I think trends in society that last for many years are very important to consider (because they will shape the kind of society we will have in the future).

I also have decided to focus on things that I am good at and things that won't be done by other people. I realize that the world needs many more engineers than philosophers. I could make a great contribution to the world designing software, but if I didn't some one else would. If I don't try to prepare people for the future, no one else will. I can afford to pay for someone to clean my

house, cook my food, and write the software I use, but I couldn't afford to pay someone to do my work, or even the most basic parts, to my standards with the amount of money I have.

3.12.2 My Vision of the Future

I see our future as a challenge and an opportunity. To think that we will just give up, because life becomes very different or more difficult is a response that doesn't comprehend the extent of human creativity and ignores the reality of a benevolent Creator, who has proven His desire to help transform us and the society we live in.

People have lived throughout most of history at a level of basic subsistence and we have only had fossil fuels, electricity, and modern plumbing for a very short period of this history. While the small group of people that controls most that goes on in the world has made some decisions that were not made within the context of potential long term technological, political, economic and social evolution and adaptation, we are not going to be totally annihilated.

Now is the time to rethink what is important in life and what our priorities should be. Before we get into major engineering projects which are costly in time and money, we need to work on the kind of expectations we need to have of our children to prepare them physically, emotionally, morally, and spiritually for a world we cannot yet imagine.

We need to learn to do more with less, develop disciplined habits in spending, physical fitness, and energy use. We need to rethink whether or not we need each and every thing we spend time or money on. Things are changing fast and will accelerate, so we need to start planning what we want life to be like, before all our decisions are made for us. Define your future instead of just passively accepting what others have decided for you.

3.12.3 Patience

Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

16

It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.

17

But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

18

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

19

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

20

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

21

¹⁶Ecclesiastes 7:8

¹⁷Lamentations 3:26

¹⁸Luke 8:15

¹⁹Romans 8:25

²⁰Romans 15:4

²¹Galatians 6:9

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

22

Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

23

Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

24

And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

25

That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

26

For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

27

²²Colossians 1:10

²³1 Thessalonians 1:3

²⁴1 Thessalonians 5:14

²⁵2 Thessalonians 3:5

²⁶Hebrews 6:12

²⁷Hebrews 10:36

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

28

Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

29

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

30

3.12.4 Perseverance

Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually.

31

The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.

²⁸Hebrews 12:1

²⁹James 1:3-4

³⁰2 Peter 1:5-8

³¹1 Chronicles 16:11

32

Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.

33

Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

34

The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

35

And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

36

And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

37

And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

³²Job 17:9

³³Psalm 37:24

³⁴Psalm 73:24

³⁵Psalm 138:8

³⁶Jeremiah 32:40

³⁷Matthew 10:22

38

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

39

Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

40

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.

41

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He

³⁸Luke 22:31-32

³⁹John 6:37-40

⁴⁰John 8:31-32

⁴¹John 10:27-30

that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

42

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

⁴²John 15:4-9

43

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

44

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

45

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

46

But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

47

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

48

3.12.5 Ways to Develop Discipline

1. Find role models who are disciplined
2. Pray for God's help to become disciplined
3. Read the Bible

⁴³Romans 8:30-39

⁴⁴1 Corinthians 15:38

⁴⁵Ephesians 6:18

⁴⁶Hebrews 10:23

⁴⁷James 1:4

⁴⁸1 Peter 5:8

4. Fast or go on a diet
5. Save money or give to charity
6. Volunteer
7. Learn a foreign human or computer language
8. Learn a martial art
9. Meditate
10. Exercise consistently
11. Do anything constructive for a long time
12. Even developing a schedule is a start

3.13 Learn to be Kind and Patient

3.13.1 First, Learn from Others' Experiences

1. Find others to emulate who are kind
2. Pray for God's help to become kind
3. Read the Bible

3.13.2 Second, Broaden your Reading

1. Read about a wide range of history
2. Read a variety of ethical writings
3. Read up on common manners
4. Read biographies of famous people

3.13.3 Third, Get your own Unique Perspective

1. Learn your family history
2. Write your own autobiography
3. Discover or develop your own beliefs
4. Understand why you think the way you do

3.13.4 Fourth, Understand that Differences are OK

1. Read things that conflict with your beliefs
2. Find similarities to your beliefs in these writings
3. Try to understand the reason why others think differently

3.13.5 Fifth, Learn Communication Skills

1. Understand how you say things is as important as what you say
2. Learn to be direct
3. Learn how to read body language
4. Learn to evaluate situations from an emotional perspective

3.13.6 Sixth, Learn to Think Empathetically Instead of Purely Fact Based

1. Read writings of famous mystics
2. Read poetry
3. Practice being kind to animals
4. Learn to be subtle
5. Listen to highly sensitive people

3.13.7 Seventh, Learn from Experience

1. Spend time around people that are hard to get along with
2. Spend time around people in pain
3. Volunteer to help those who are disabled
4. Listen to what others say, when you disagree with them

3.14 Being Creative and Helping Others

3.14.1 How to Think Creatively

Get Ready to Think

1. Get plenty of sleep
2. Give yourself as much time as possible
3. Thoroughly research the topic
4. Don't limit your options unnecessarily

Think About the Idea

1. Prioritize what is most important
2. Be willing to make trade-offs
3. Discuss the idea with other people
4. Take a lot of time to think about it

Try the Idea Out

1. Make controlled experiments
2. Roll out your idea in stages

Get Ready for Future Ideas

1. Be willing to try new things
2. Practice thinking differently
3. Take calculated risks
4. Try things you haven't before

3.14.2 Creativity and Saving Money

Living Without a Car

One of the big ways to save money is to not own a car. This involves a real sacrifice and can be isolating. It is not for everyone. The alternatives are most commonly: taking the bus, walking, riding a bike, and taking a taxi. Each has its own purpose and more than one can be used, based on the situation.

What Riding the Bus is Like

If you have good bus service in your town, this could be a solution by itself. One of the things to plan for is to live at a major intersection in town, so that they are unlikely to cut your stop or route, because, at least in my town, they make service cuts every year. One of the things about the bus, at least in my town, is that a bus may not come at the scheduled frequency (they are never on time), if the bus is full or they are behind schedule, so you have to allow extra time. Another thing that is frustrating is dealing with the drivers, who: will often not stop at the right stops, will want you to hurry on the bus at some times and then at others make you wait for people to get off (that you can't see), and they often don't give you time to sit down or to get off before driving off. In my town, the service is good weekday mornings and afternoons. You also cannot carry big packages or luggage, drink or eat, or listen to load music on the bus.

Bus People

The people on the bus can be frustrating too. Most people who ride the bus do so, because they cannot afford any other options. Most people who ride the bus are: kids, the elderly, people with various disabilities like those in wheelchairs and the developmentally disabled, the poor, and people who have lost their licenses to drive, due to reckless or drunk driving. Many people on the bus have bad manners and have a hard time getting along with others. Usually there is at least one person who is very annoying, who does something like: making loud repetitive sounds, staring at you, going on and on with irrational ramblings, or trying to start a conversation with you or the bus driver. I try not to make eye contact with anyone and avoid smiling, which helps keep people from harassing me directly. I also avoid certain times and routes to avoid certain annoying people.

Alternatives to the Bus

If I want to get anywhere on the weekends, I either walk or take a taxi. I have tried using a taxi, to get to a meeting, at a certain time, but I found that, if you call them too early, they forget and that not very many taxis are running on the weekend. There must not be much competition for taxis in my town. Riding a bike around town works well, in my town, because of all the bike paths, but you will have to find somewhere to put your bike (there isn't much room on the bus for them) and you should avoid getting a nice one as they are often stolen. Riding a bike in the rain is not fun either and it is hard to carry packages.

Re-Occurring Expenses

Another big way to save money is to reduce re-occurring expenses. Some of these include cell phones, cable TV, Internet, games, movies, music, computers, software, and eating out. Not everyone needs every electronic device out there. People survived fine for thousand of year without cell phones. Most people do not have much time to

watch cable TV, so for most people that is a bad investment. You can get the entire season of a show on DVD or on iTunes and just see what you want, without paying, for all the stuff you never watch on cable. The Internet is vital for most people, but check the rates from different companies and different plans, not usually advertised, and you can also get free wireless network, at many different businesses in many areas, like restaurants and coffee shops. You can save money on music, by just buying the songs you want on iTunes, instead of purchasing an entire CD, for one song. You can also save money, by buying movies on iTunes, rather than buying them on DVD or Blu-ray. Many people can actually save money on a Mac, due to not having to pay lots of money for constant repairs, because Macs last longer, and Macs have much higher resale value. You can save on software, by using open source software, instead of paying hundreds of dollars, for Microsoft and Adobe titles.

3.14.3 Theft or Charity

The Meaning of Free Culture

Free culture is a movement primarily Internet based and is an information era application of a much older reason for publishing. Most alive today people can't remember what it was like before people created art, music, literature and that kind of thing, without the primary reason being to make money. In fact, most of the intellectual property created in the last hundred years is also not worth the same as what was created before.

Compare, for instance, sacred religious texts with popular culture creations like Disney movies. Would you more likely risk your life for the Bible or for the animated Cinderella? I believe that there is a direct connection between why something is created and its value.

The Situation Today

Today, most things that are created for profit are not very high quality. Think of a recent movie or song that you

thought would be worth preserving. The reason for this is that there is a whole network of powerful people, who act as gatekeepers of information. To reach a wide audience, you need an advertising campaign, which requires an investment of a tremendous amount of money.

Loss of Trust

The Internet is making it much cheaper to publish information and therefore, we can reach each other, instead of having to get approved by a magazine editor or TV news producer. People used to trust their newspapers and TV reporters, before my generation which has seen a tremendous number of people in the establishment caught, pushing their own agendas and publishing for the advertisers, instead of for the readers. The thing that people get really upset about is when the journalists keep on supporting the establishment, no matter what it does and then, at the same time, claim to be objective.

Foreign Workers

Another thing that is lowering the bar to getting published is that people in third world countries and major Asian nations are now taking over the jobs of American journalists, engineers, and managers. Now one seemed to care when the blue collar workers lost their jobs, because we didn't mind people of color doing menial labor, but when they moved up the ladder to white collar jobs, now everybody gets defensive and cries out about the injustice. If it is ok for factory workers to lose their jobs to foreign workers, it is also ok for white collar workers to lose their jobs as well (and it is about time).

The Best Way to Fight

Many people's response is to steal songs and movies, because they don't find them worth the cost. But the problem with this is we just end up with less control over our media purchases and many people go to jail. The better way to fight the establishment and their control over our

information, is to produce the content ourselves. I cannot single handedly provide enough information for everyone in America, but together with hundreds of thousand of others, we can cover a lot of ground.

When someone got a degree in a field, they used to have a certain level of competence, but the professional community has lowered its standards of both integrity and work ethic, to the point that diplomas don't mean much anymore. We may not be able to match the resources to do the same amount of research, but we can contribute without a profit motive, which makes us much more "objective".

Serve your Country

We need to have a free culture in America worth the sacrifices of our military service members and other Department of Defense and State Department workers. Especially as I am a veteran, I believe that it is very important that our military doesn't become an arm of corporations and their desire to get more money and power, at the expense of the average citizen. I do not believe that Disney movies, the NASCAR, or the Wall Street Journal are worth dying for. So if you want to help America and don't want to get burned alive and have permanent brain damage from serving in Iraq or Afghanistan, you will serve your country very well at home, by making sure we have something in America worth sacrificing lives for.

3.14.4 Reasons to Create Rather than Consume

Help Yourself

- you can promote the things you have interests in
- you can be in control
- you can become famous
- if you want something done right, do it yourself
- you know best what you like

- you can pass the time
- you can get a better job
- you can create a market for your job
- you can create things for advertising

Enhance Your Self-Esteem

- you can take pride in your creation
- you can expand your interests
- creating for others provides meaning in your life
- you can find a new hobby
- you can see beyond your circumstances

Learn New Things

- you can enhance your experience
- you learn best by creating based on what you learn
- you can learn a new skill or perfect a skill
- you can make a good resume and portfolio
- you can learn to be patient
- you can learn discipline
- you can develop a work ethic
- you can expand your knowledge

Help Others

- if no one created, there would be nothing to consume
- you can influence others
- you can leave a legacy for your children
- you can meet other people

- you can be a role model
- you can contribute to your community
- you can make your family look good

3.14.5 Why Volunteer?

Getting Perspective

When a person has plenty of money, they have a nice family, and they still feel a lack of purpose or joy in life, a good psychologist will often recommend the client becoming a volunteer or, in some other way, donating their time, for the benefit of others. One of the great things about spending your time making other people's lives better is that it gives you perspective. Many of us in the modern United States have lived very sheltered lives and have little perspective on how the majority of the world lives.

The Way the Youth Live

Basically, we are often spoiled rotten, in comparison. Many of us don't know what difficult really means. We spend most our youth going to school for a few hours day and don't have to even try to pass classes. Most children spend most their free time playing games, chatting or texting on a mobile phone, or hanging around at the local mall. This generation expects more than even my generation did. Kids now expect to be entertained, in order for them to put any effort, into learning at school.

Lazy Employees

Employees, even my parents age, typically do nothing but complain all day. It seems that people's greatest fear these days is actually doing their job correctly. We get paid so much more than any other country and yet we feel no loyalty to the company who pays us and have no pride in what we do. It is true that we have made some great progress, in the last couple generations, as far as rights for women and people of color, but we seem to have gone too far the other way now.

Greater Expectations

The biggest problem today is that people are lazy, because their parents never taught them any work ethic. We need to raise the expectations in our children, if we want to have responsible adult citizens. And somehow this generation needs to learn discipline as adults. If we don't learn the easy way, we will be forced to learn the hard way. The easy way is to learn these values by our own choice and in our own way, but if we fail to learn this way, we will be forced to learn as a result of our country falling apart and the economy coming to a complete standstill.

No Easy Way

To have joy in life, we need to have more outlets than just work and play. Some people help others just with their jobs, but most people will not find fulfillment in working alone. If we do nothing after work, but entertain ourselves with corporate media, we will not feel at peace. Constantly distracting yourself does not keep you from having to find meaning in life. There is no substitute way to get self esteem, without putting effort into something. There is no pill that will make you happy, all by itself.

Be a Patriot

It breaks my heart to see the service members give their lives and their health, just for us to be able to consume more. There is no point in fighting for our freedom to choose Coke or Pepsi, Toyota or Honda, Republican or Democrat, and the like. We need to make choices that involve sacrifice. We need to delay our gratification, in order to exercise our free will. The things that are really worth doing require a tremendous effort. Writing a book, running a marathon, spending a year overseas, joining the Peace Corps, becoming an Eagle Scout, participating in local theater, working on a political campaign, and raising money to help the environment are all things that will help you be grateful for the things you already have.

Chapter 4

Positive News about The World

by Ben Huot

4.1 American Problems and the Bible

4.1.1 Where I am Coming From

Historical Perspective

Anyway, I decided to write this to encourage people today and to give some historical perspective partly gained by now being 32, living on my own for a number of years, my study of history, and my insights about God, that have come to me over the last 12 years. I think it would be best for people to stop watching the news. There are major changes happening in the world today, but I think we should be excited about them and not afraid of them.

No One Knows When

First of all I believe that no one knows the future or controls it except God and that just as the first coming of Jesus was not predicted by anyone, the same will happen in his second coming. I think that studying prophecy should only be done to show how God is in control of history and not to predict future events. The smartest theologians in history could not even understand the most basic theology of the Bible and they have never successfully predicted the future.

Unique Perspective

I also have no clear idea about the future, but I do have an unusual perspective on world history, I am very creative, and am good at connecting things that seem unrelated. First of all, America has nothing to fear in the future. America will no longer be the world power but will likely be a world power. I think that the American big business view of the world is going to be proven wrong and will fail. Things will get harder economically in America, but things will improve in many other ways. One of the things that scares me most is being in the world all alone, but that is unlikely. Even if we have an apocalyptic

event like a nuclear war, there will still be a huge number of people left.

4.1.2 American Problems

Not So Bad in America

Another thing that people don't seem to understand in America is that economists have a very poor record of understanding and explaining the present and have an even worse record of predicting the future. I think that we tend to overestimate our weaknesses and underestimate our strengths. I think that a lot of our world problems come from other world rivals trying to make things more difficult for America by distorting what other countries know about America. Just like I think Microsoft will be important in the future as a spoiler so is Russia. Russia still has global ambitions and blames us for its fall. Many of the growing powers in the world may well self destruct long before they threaten the US.

American Ignorance

I think Americans are often very naive about international politics, because we do not study world history in schools. The most important part of history is the very first part and the last couple centuries are actually least important. America is an anomaly in world history. America has lot fewer and less severe problems compared to the rest of the world because of our geography (no enemies on our borders), our abundant natural resources (which were mostly wood and fish), and our low population density. Almost everyone in the world, who is trying to improve the world would choose to live in the US, if they had a choice.

4.2 World History

4.2.1 Role of Technology and Economics

Origin of Middle East Problems

The Middle East was the way it is today because of decisions the people who live there made in the past. The spread of Islam and the Arab people was another anomaly of world history. Throughout most of history, people had far fewer freedoms than we enjoy today and at the most there were a few religious choices that were approved. The others were persecuted.

Technology and History

One of the keys to world history is the level of technology available at the time. For a very long time, throughout most of recorded history, what is now Europe traded with what is now India, Southeast Asia, and China and this was important for the world economy. Our modern way of life is all based on the energy we get from coal and oil. Without it, we will lose our technology very fast. How many people could build a printing press from scratch or know how to make an effective plough. These inventions took centuries and can be lost very easily.

Roman Empire Success

The Roman Empire was made possible because the technology of that era allowed people to navigate the Mediterranean, but was not advanced enough to allow voyage by the major world oceans. Rome became powerful when they took over North Africa (which supplied most of the food for the Roman Empire), Egypt, and the Middle East (which allowed them to financially benefit from the trade that went from the Mediterranean through the Red Sea and into the Arabian Sea to India).

Ascension of Europe

Europe was able to dominate most of the world during the last 500 years, which a big contributing factor was that the Portuguese figured out how to go from Europe and around the coast of Africa to India, China, and South-east Asia. One of the very important things that Europe needed from South and East Asia were spices, because they needed to preserve food and make them taste good enough to eat without modern refrigeration.

Technology vs. Morality

At this same time, Asia became increasingly weak and Europe became much stronger. This was partly because of slight weather changes and European mastery of weapons technology like guns and the shift in warfare technology that favored discipline over personal combat skills and bravery. Another factor that made India and China weak was the desire to focus on moral development and to not pursue technological advancement as aggressively as the west. European nations also gained wealth and power through taking over what they called colonies which were mostly along their major trade routes to the Orient.

4.2.2 European Experience

Rome Not First Church

The Roman Catholic Church has convinced many people that it was the first church, but this is wrong. There were four equal and independent Christian centers and Rome was the least important (although it and the churches that separated from it after the reformation were the most successful politically for the last 500 years). The centers were, in order of importance: Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, and Rome. The Church out of Alexandria became the Coptic church and the Ethiopian church is part of this, the Church out of Antioch divided into the East and West Assyrian Churches (who were responsible for the Islamic renaissance) who spoke Syriac, the Church out of Constantinople became what is now called

the Eastern Orthodox Church who spoke Greek, and the Church out of Rome became the Roman Catholic Church who spoke Latin.

Parting Ways

The Roman Catholic Church has historically persecuted the other churches more than any other church. Each of these centers were political and economic centers as well. Antioch was an important economic center and Alexandria was an important intellectual center. The Western Roman Empire out of Rome became the basis for the church and political power of medieval Europe, but mostly just in the former Roman Empire lands including what is now Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, and England and Ireland shortly afterwards.

Christianity and Paganism

During much of the Middle ages, much of Europe was pagan. Christians, in what is now called England, where pillaged and then if caught were tortured, until they converted to paganism, by the Vikings (from Norway, Denmark, and Sweden). The reason the English came, to what is now called England, was that they were invited from Germany, to fight off the pagan Vikings. The English became powerful enough and pushed the indigenous Celts into Cornwall, Wales, and Scotland and took over what was now England, with what started out as separate kingdoms.

Viking Legacy

The English monarchy starts with when the Normans invaded England in 1066. The Scots came from Ireland and the King of Scotland eventually inherited the thrown of Scotland and England. They were united in the start of the 19th Century and that is where the Union Jack comes from. England never took over Scotland. The Vikings eventually converted to Christianity and the ones that settled in northern France became the nobility throughout

Europe and became the leaders that started Russia (with the help of the Byzantine Empire). Russia was considered by many to be the third Rome after Constantinople and was a major center of the Eastern Orthodox Church until the Russian communist revolution during World War 1.

Christianity as Unifying Factor

During what Europe called the Middle Ages, Europe regressed technologically and became very religious and the Church was the only unifying factor. People starved for centuries, until they started to join kingdoms together and England, France, Spain, and Portugal united, to form the countries in roughly as they are today, the weather then changed in the 13th century, then after the bubonic plague which killed 1/3 of Europe, the Renaissance was started with the help of the Byzantine (Eastern Orthodox) monks, just before church in Constantinople (more important than the church in Rome) was taken over by the Ottoman Turks and turned into a mosque.

4.2.3 Asian Experience

Asia was the World

During this same period, Asia was the world and Christianity was most active in Syria, Iraq, and Iran (as well as Ethiopia) and a small part of India. During the Roman Empire, Asia was just as important or more with the Persian Empire and the Chinese Empire (Han Dynasty). From the 4th to the 14th centuries Asia was at its zenith. The Church out of Rome and Constantinople persecuted the Church out of Antioch, so the Syriac Christians moved into the Persian Empire.

Reasons for Spread of Islam

Then after the western part of the Roman Empire fell apart, the Byzantine Empire (out of Constantinople) and the Persian empire became weak after fighting each other. Islam started and became a politically uniting force for

the Arabs (who lived in what is now called the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) and then they were able to take over the Middle East and North Africa. The Christians there welcomed the Arabs (who were Muslims) into the Middle East, because they feared the Byzantine Empire more.

Europe Fights Off Islam

The Islamic Empires almost took over Europe twice, the result of which would have made Christianity an obscure African religion. The first time was after the Arabs took over North Africa, they went into Spain and luckily were defeated in southern France. Centuries later, the Ottoman Empire almost took over Europe, but were defeated by the Hungarians. The reason why the Muslims were there in Bosnia was that they were settled resettled there by the Ottoman Empire, which was expanding its empire into Eastern Europe (at the expense of the Christian nations there).

Ethnic Cleansing of Christians

Muslims got along with Christians in the Middle East for centuries, but many Muslims began to persecute many Christians about the same time as the Ottoman Empire was born. In fact the word genocide was developed after World War 2 to describe how the Muslims were destroying an entire linguistic and religious group (the Syriac Christians). At the beginning of the 20th Century half of the Ottoman Empire was still Christian. There are still some Christians in the Middle East. 10% of the population of both Syria and Egypt are Christian. There is also a large community of Christians in modern Lebanon (mostly Maronite).

4.3 The US and the World Today

4.3.1 American Perspective

Baseless Worrying

I remember as a kid how we feared Japan would own most of the US and how we thought we couldn't compete in areas like electronics. Now Sony and Nintendo are afraid of Apple and Japan has been declining for some time and has a much grimmer outlook than the US. The problem we have in America with too many old people and not enough young people is much worse in Japan. People seem to be afraid India and China will overtake the US.

We Can Feed Ourselves

The thing that people in our country don't understand is that China cannot even feed itself without food imports and the US still produces 25% of the world's food. Even without modern technology it would be conceivable to be able to feed our entire present population if we were smarter about what we grew, where we grew it, and where we lived. If we lost our modern technologies we would very quickly adapt.

Life will Return Soon

For a few weeks, things would be rough. But there would quickly be less crime. Once one person loots and they are shot for it, people will stop stealing. When the electricity (including hospitals and the sewage system) is off for a week, people will realize that it will never come back again and adjust. People will actually become closer friends as we will need each other. The church will be much stronger because people will feel they need God. People will be so much healthier that most people who need modern medications will no longer need them. Most people will be happier than before and we will likely have a higher literacy rate.

Importance of Economy

I think the thing that is most dangerous to the US is our debt. I think that every country that wants us to fail including the Muslim extremists (there are Christian Arab terrorists as well) are trying to kill us by bankrupting us. Wars have often been one by one side over spending to fight the war. When we spend 100 times what the terrorists spend, then we are losing the war. The key to our economic problems in America is our personal and corporate debt. The most important part of national independence is the economy. Many empires have failed because they didn't understand economics.

4.3.2 Rest of the World

China's Problems

Another problem China has is that its population is growing, so that it needs substantial growth just to keep everyone employed. China is also very polarized between the rich and fast growing eastern coast and the remote inland parts of China where people are of different ethnic groups, very poor, and the agricultural land is being destroyed by sand blowing in. China will likely split into multiple countries. This would make democracy more likely in at least one of the new countries.

Indian and Russian Problems

India and Russia also have large problems. Russia depends a lot on oil prices being high for its economy. Another problem for India which directly affect Russia is that in the next generation or two global warming will likely dry up the major river in India. Russia might have a hard time integrating a billion people into Siberia.

Europe's Problems

Europe will suffer a lot from global warming with increased immigration from the Middle East and North Africa (as they will become uninhabitable in a couple generations).

Europe could also become a lot like Siberia very quickly if the major ocean currents change. Europe has a very dense population and even though they have diversified their energy sources more than the US, they still depend on oil, especially from Russia. Europe will not do well in this situation and cannot feed its population without modern technology.

4.3.3 Comparing the US to the World

Europe is Falling Apart

Many people think that Europe will outdo the US economically. But this is unlikely, if we think about the history of Europe and its geography, demographics, and natural resources. Before the 2 World Wars, the UK, France, and Germany were all global power, by themselves. When they lost their colonies, mostly after the next few decades following World War II for France and the UK and World War I for Germany, they almost destroyed themselves from centuries of war after war. Now the UK, France, and Germany have to unite together, to compete against America economically.

Non-US Economies Weak

One of the big weaknesses of Europe and Japan, which makes their economies less resilient than the US, is that they focus on only a few industries and these are dominated by a few big corporations, so when one of these companies loses market share, the whole economy suffers. At this point, there is little still left that can keep European countries at First World economic status, over the next two generations. Many people now think the same fate will fall on the US, but our empire is mostly in the continental US, and we are much bigger and have many more resources than Europe has. We are still the world's main consumers, so China, India, Europe and all the other major economies still want to trade with us, for their own survival.

US Not Like Europe

Another thing to consider is that we have plenty of free space in our country and will have a big increase in our population, which will allow our large quantity of baby boomers in retirement a big enough base of young people, to support them. Of course, we will still go through tough times, in the US, but in Europe, China, and Japan these countries are all going to see a much bigger bubble of retired people, to support, as their countries are shrinking in population and cannot afford to keep increasing in numbers, even if they did have enough kids.

The other major factor, that puts the US in a better position than other major economic powers is that our empire is not far away geographically, nor is one part of our country holding another part of the country under their control. Even if the US split up, into regional countries, we would still be able to provide for ourselves, because most of our country has a least enough natural resources, to survive on their own, especially if they are willing to trade with each other.

4.4 Limits of Studies

4.4.1 Limits in Reading

My Focus of Study

I have studied world religions and philosophies for the greater part of 12 years. I have studied all the major belief system of the world including Chinese, Indian, and Middle Eastern Belief systems as well as the Enlightenment, Existentialism, Nietzsche (based on the Pre-Socratics), Epicureanism, and Stoicism. I also studied about the major events in history focusing on the between the 4th and 14th Centuries and focusing mainly on the Asian region.

Polytheism

There were a number of different religious texts which I did not read. Christians would call these occult, but I

have been searching for a word that would explain the same things to non-believers. I have just recently thought of the basic differentiator that separates the occult religions from the major world belief systems (revealed religions) is that the occult religions all worship more than one god. Sometimes people refer to this as Polytheism.

What the Bible Forbids

Some belief systems like Animism or Neo-Paganism I would not read any primary texts, while with Middle Eastern, Indian and Chinese belief systems I have avoided the ones that talk about worship of other gods. The main thing the Bible forbids Christians to take part in are supernatural practices not done by the one Creator God, and not done how it is prescribed to do in the Bible. Christians do have rituals but they are not the same as the ones used to worship other gods.

4.4.2 Limits in Worship

Christian Rituals

Some of the more well known and widely practiced Christian rituals described in the Bible include: The Lord's Prayer, baptism, communion, Pentecost (also known as "speaking in tongues"), laying on of hands, anointing with oil, fasting, testimony, reading scriptures in public, the Sabbath, Easter/Passover, and other various festivals talked about in the Old Testament. Other ones were added later like Christmas, weddings, funerals, dedication of young children to the Christ and His Church, and others, some with less scriptural basis.

Places of Worship

I also do not practice any other religion other than Christianity nor would I attend worship services of a number of religions or go into their places of worship like: Hindu Temples, Tibetan Buddhist gatherings, Religious (or Esoteric) Taoist gatherings. I have attended a zendo meditation and visited a mosque. I would also like to visit a Sikh

temple and a Jewish temple. The only one I would worship in other than a Christian church would be a Jewish temple.

4.4.3 Limits in Travel

Disadvantages of Traveling

I also have not traveled outside my country at all and am not likely to travel to Europe, Asia, or Africa. I am not going overseas because it is very stressful for me to travel and I do not do well under stress. I like living in a city where I can go anywhere in town without being in a dangerous neighborhood. It also is very expensive to travel and I think I could use my money more productively. Also, many of the greatest treasures of Asia and Europe are in their written works that I can get modern English translations of them very inexpensively.

Regional Problems

I would also break my heart to see the castles and cathedrals in Europe and know that they had to give up their great forests for these. I would not want to travel to Africa because of the instability of most of the governments there, and the parts of Asia I would want to see would be very polluted, remote, or not a good place for Americans to go. I know many people visit places like China and Russia that they think are friendly to Americans, but I don't want to take a chance. After being in the military I know that traveling outside your country poses many other risks, that many world travelers manage to avoid, but could cost them dearly, if they run into the wrong situation or violate certain laws.

Life is Good Here

I live in a very beautiful and safe part of the world. We don't have many natural disasters, we can grow our own food, we are sparsely populated, we have mild weather (just enough change to see the seasons) we have plenty

of water and the best quality of water, and very few poisonous or even biting insects (other than some small mosquitos). We even have many types of environments, including: desert, beautiful unspoiled beaches (although very cold and with dangerous undertows), mountains with enough snow to ski on them, huge forests, even many virgin forests (never before logged). The only bad thing where I live is the lack of jobs. There are also not many young people in my town.

4.5 Why I Wrote my Books

There are a number of reason why I decided to write what later turned into 50 books.

4.5.1 Documenting My Experience

One of the reasons why I wrote these books was to document my personal progress, in learning to cope with Schizophrenia and to document what is happening in the world today, as I believe we are in a time of one of the biggest changes in history. This documentation was prepared, by me, for others, who might be going through similar situations.

4.5.2 Why Re-Write the Classics?

The Value of my Work

I also wanted to keep a record of the most important Asian classics. There are two reasons why I didn't just buy and store a bunch of copies of these Asian classics, in modern English translations. It wasn't because I think I can write on the same level. History will decide what value my books are, but an encouraging sign is my lack of popularity in my own time. Many of the greatest thinkers in history were considered failures in their lifetime.

Increasing their Survivability

One of the reasons then for writing about these great classics was because I was able to condense them into a very small space (relatively), so they would be easier to transport and store safely. The other major reason is that I own the copyright on my own books and can let people copy them freely, but I cannot do the same, for modern English translations, of these Asian classics.

4.5.3 Restoring Asian Christianity

Asian Religions are Not New Age

Another reason for my books is to let Christians know that most major Asian belief systems can be studied, without violating scripture, and also letting them know that the New Age movement takes nothing more from any other Asian belief system than it takes from Christianity. I want Christians to have an appreciation for Asian belief systems other than Christianity, so that they can see Christianity as it was originally understood – as an Asian religion.

Christianity is Not European

One of the things that really changed how Christians practice their faith (for the worse) has been the assumption that Christianity is a European religion. In most of the world it is now understood that Christianity is either or both Asian and/or African, but in America and Europe many still are not aware of this. In the next couple generations the conception of a white Christian is going to be very unusual, even in America and in Europe.

Christianity in Europe

Christianity was only considered European, because of the genocide committed in against Asian Christians. Despite this situation, Christianity has taken hold and is on the increase in most parts of the world, which more than makes up for its loses in America and Europe. In fact,

the only reason why the European royalty ever accepted Christianity is because the Christian God was more powerful than the pagan gods and they believed this would help them win wars.

4.6 Gifts from Europe

4.6.1 New Ideas

Uniquely European

Europe has often been behind Asia in terms of the value of its contributions to the humanities. There are some positive things that European culture has either taken on or come up with itself. One of the big ones are the Sciences and Social Sciences. Asian cultures did invent things, but they did not use the Scientific Method, per say. I think Europe brought about the idea that there are separate physical forces, that affect us, that are not directly related to spiritual problems.

New Understanding

Understanding that the physical aspects of the world behave according to certain physical laws, that are not directly attributed to spiritual causes was an important discovery. In the not too distant past, people would have thought that I was possessed and they would never realize what is the direct cause of my mental illness (which is chemical) and so not be able to treat it effectively. In the not too distant past, concepts like the idea that the mind could be treated separately from the soul and the concept of studying economics was not even dreamt of.

4.6.2 Physical and Spiritual World Complementary

Both Realities are Important

I think it is bad to see the world as entirely physical or to think that the physical part of the world is more impor-

tant than the spiritual world is a grave mistake. I think that people trust Science to solve all their problems and don't realize that most conflicts are spiritual in nature. On the other hand, thinking that everything is spiritual makes it difficult to stay rooted in reality.

Both Aspects Need Each Other

It would improve our society to have people aware of the spiritual consequences of their decisions and behavior, but the world would never function well enough, to allow time to reflect on these kinds of things, without most people working in a concrete, rational, and analytical focused endeavors. In other words, even though the most important parts of society, that makes us human and life worth living comes from what is not necessary, but without most people focusing on keeping the economy going and maintaining basic infrastructure, the former would not even be possible.

4.6.3 Value of New Ideas

New Concepts of Freedom

But another great idea that came from Europe or was developed by Europeans primarily is the concept of personal freedoms, both as a legal concept and as well as a social endeavor. While in contrast to the cultural sophistication of Asia, Europe appears very simple and barbaric, the freedom to express yourself, without conforming to any tradition is uniquely European in origin.

The Asian Burden

One of the things that has increased my stress recently has been trying to think exclusively from an Asian perspective. I think one of the downsides of such a vast wealth of truly inspiring cultural traditions, that the desire to emulate these traditions causes undo stress. Sometimes I want to just write a poem or draw a picture and I shouldn't feel it needs to conform to some traditional expression of some profound concept.

4.6.4 Combining the Two

Living a Balanced life

A life that is obsessed with the study of ethics and discipline is not a very balanced life. There needs to be a place for relaxation and enjoyment of life experiences and we need to keep ourselves firmly in the here and now. One of the ways to get relief from the focus on self improvement is by doing things that do not require thought. And both can strengthen each other. Often I get my best insights when doing something mundane like copying files, listening to music, watching a movie, or riding the bus. And I when I feel good mentally then I am able to be more positive and useful in my writing.

The Best of Both Worlds

I think it would be great if both East and West could learn from each other and I look forward to a day, when most people are willing to takes the best from every culture and not feel that they need to choose between important ideas, even if they are only paradoxically related. It is in the embracing of the paradox of living in a physical world, consumed with an overflowing of our emotions and in the simple daily tasks we do, to keep our bodies and minds strong, while still being aware of a bigger spiritual world that we also take part in, through our interactions with each other and knowing, that the basis for our sense of purpose and direction, in our lives can only be understood spiritually.

4.7 Technological Progress

Many people are afraid, that everyone will eventually be so focused on technology, that they will end up not having an human contact. But that is not the direction that things are going. Instead of people serving computers, now computers are serving people.

4.7.1 New Priorities

Mobility and Simplicity

One of the biggest changes, in how people use computers and what they expect of them, is the focus on mobility, being the most important requirement, in designing new products. The other big change in computing is the willingness of the average end user, to spend lots of time getting things set up, on their computer, doing computer maintenance, and needing to repair things, that break down over time. The web is changing in the direction of not making the user have to think, to navigate the website.

Reliability over Function

People are not getting more interested and obsessed about how technology works, but rather are losing patience with it taking up so much of their time. To sum this up, computers are becoming mainstream for consumers and people's needs are more simple than the developers think, and they are more interested in improving the way they do things, than what they can do or how it is done. Sometimes the process is more important than the outcome and sometimes the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

4.7.2 Current Trends

New Technologies

Think of the big hit technologies of the past few years, like the new Apple mobile devices, or the Nintendo Wii and other game consoles. People have even tried using the web, to keep in contact with their friends and family, that live far away. Twitter and Facebook have become as important as Google. People used to have fun looking up things, that they heard, that they did not know much about, or enjoyed just surfing the net and following links, but today they are more interested in finding a restaurant, or directions to the nearest movie theater. Google

now focuses on giving relevant answers quicker and more directly, rather than making you do all the work. Technology is changing, to improve people's ability, to engage with others socially.

Land Warrior: Finding Things Faster

There has also been a revolution in technologies used in combat. The Army and Marines are now rolling out into production a system called LandWarrior. It is designed, to allow instant communication, between every soldier, from private to general, instantly. One of the big things it helps soldier, on the ground, do is allow them, to get to the sites, where they have received intelligence about more quickly. This allows fewer soldiers, to be more successful and has helped turn the tide of the war, in Iraq.

Land Warrior: Being Aware of Its Limits

One of the ways, in which this helps soldiers is to give them real time maps, for their navigation. In the past, they had to consult a map and compass, to navigate, but now all they have to do is look in the eyepiece, of their squad leaders computer, and they know instantly where they are. At first, the soldiers would constantly have their eyepiece down, but found out soon, that they only needed to consult it, from time to time. Just as soldiers are finding a way, to make technology serve them, instead of being run around by it, so the consumer is becoming empowered, to use technologies, to improve their lives, instead of the computers wasting their time and making them less productive.

4.7.3 Future Trends

Sci Fi Tech

When you see how computers are used in futuristic Sci Fi films like Star Trek, most the devices they use are simple and small and they only have one traditional computer, in the form of a mainframe, for the ship. The devices they

use, that they carry with them, are thin and light and are designed for the most common uses and do not try to do everything every specialist would need, in rare occasions. They have a tablet style computer for writing and reading, a sensor about the size of a smartphone, and specialized devices for things like sensing life and doing medical procedures.

A Generational Thing

While my parents generation see computers as a novelty and are so surprised, with what they are able to do and so intimidated by how they work (their complexity) and my generation is most experienced, with getting things to work for them and has little confidence, in relying upon them, to get work done, the next generation is taking technology, as a given, and are comfortable enough with it, to see it as a tool and nothing more. Just like when phones were invented and many were upset, that people would stop visiting each other, in person, or when VCRs came out the movie industry thought they would never get anyone, to go to a movie theater, so we will find the most useful role, for computers, in our lives and will stop allowing them to be some sort of mysterious and feared monster.

4.8 The Apocalypse

4.8.1 Making Predictions

What Christians Think

Many of the most prominent and influential Christian leaders have thought that we are very close to the End of Times and the Apocalypse. There are several reasons for this. One reason is that there is a certain number of years between the major events in biblical history and the year 2000 timeframe gives the same amount of time between Christ's death and His return. Another reason is that technologies are available now, that would allow people to be able to destroy, on the scale described in Biblical

prophecy about the End of Times. The third major reason is the return of Jewish people to Israel and the establishment of a Jewish nation, which was prophesied to happen before Christ's return. The fourth major reason is that we are getting close to bringing the gospel to all the nations on the earth. The fifth reason is because of all the wars going on in the Middle East, where Armageddon is supposed to happen.

Every Prediction was Wrong

This belief in the eminent return of Christ has had profound impact on the focus of Christian' efforts. Because so many Christians believe God is coming back so soon, they are not going to invest time in bringing social justice and the relief of suffering to the masses. But this generation is no more likely to be the End of Times than any other time in history. Biblical scholars have all been wrong in their predictions of the End of Times and this is because that Biblical prophecy is very cryptic about when this will happen, just like how people were surprised about the first coming of Jesus.

4.8.2 God will Help Us

God is in Control

Many people think that the devil is planning the apocalypse and we are waiting for him to decide what time, but this is not biblical. God is in control of history and the Apocalypse and the reason why Word War II, Napoleon's empire, or the Cold War did not end up being Armageddon is because God said no, even though the devil wanted it to happen then. In fact, the cryptic nature of the prophecy about the Apocalypse was designed not only to keep Christians on their toes and motivate them to do what is right and spread the gospel, but it was also designed so that the angels, including the fallen ones, could not predict the time either. We continue to try to put our preconceptions about reality on God, and we do not see His plans,

because we are too focused on worldly endeavors, like politics and business.

We Know Very little

Jesus could come back today or even a hundred thousand years in the future. In fact, when it happens we will likely not even see it, until the end of the first half of the seven year Tribulation. Also, from God's perspective, a day is the same as a thousand years, so the time could be very different than we have guessed, from the prophecy in the book of Daniel. We don't even know whether or not Christians will be in the world during the Tribulation or how to reconcile the battle of Armageddon, which is the last battle, with the battle that seems to follow it, called Gog and Magog.

No Reason to Worry

There is no reason to worry when we know so little about it. God has always been with us and provided us a way to cope with everything, that we have had to deal with, and He will do the same in this situation. The fact is God intervenes supernaturally almost constantly, so we do not need to fear any situation. We should focus on improving our own lives and stop worrying about things we have no control over.

Trust in God

God cares about humans, even though we have done nothing to deserve it, and we are in control of our destiny. We can make choices that make our lives better or worse. We were born into different situations, which we have no control over, but worrying doesn't solve anything. We need to accept the things we cannot change and change the things we can. Besides, what would knowing about the future now help you to deal with it? If there was some way to prepare for it, don't you think God would give us that information. We often cause more worry from fear beforehand than we suffer from the situation we fear.

4.9 Peak Oil Worries

4.9.1 Moderating Factors

Not like the Dark Ages

Many people now worry about, when we run out of oil, how our country will be affected. I had at one time compared what could happen, in the worst case scenario, as similar to the end of the Roman Empire and the beginning of the Dark Ages. There are also many reason why this situation, although very traumatic and serious, will end up being much easier to deal with.

Preservation of Information

The Internet may be the poster child of what is wrong with our society, but it has allowed us to gather supplies, from the far reaches of the world and preserve books, in many different locations. One of the big things that allowed the Industrial Revolution was the invention of a more effective plow. All the secrets to doing well, without oil, are already in books and they will still be here, if and when modern society falls apart.

It will Happen Slowly

Not only will we avoid a lot of the really bad possibilities, due to the preservation of information, but the shock will not be there, because at this point, if things fell apart, it will happen very slowly. The most dangerous and devastating effects of a break down of the world economy is not the lack of modern conveniences, but, rather the violence and disorder caused by the rapid change. The federal government has a plan to deal with these things, and it looks like bailing out the banks was one of the best ways to start.

4.9.2 Advantages

Violence will Decrease

Another thing that we worry about is that we think society will break down and there will be no political or social order. One of the things that will help deal with a lack of law enforcement is the number of people with guns. Once one person steals something, from another person, after they get shot, the violence will stop suddenly.

No More Red Tape

The biggest reason why people commit crimes is that they think they will not be caught, and one of the big factors that helps them with this is the red tape, of the modern legal system. The beauty of having no official police means that we don't have the problems of a bureaucratic government and we don't have to convince anyone else of what happened or prove it. In Saudi Arabia, they cut off your right hand if you steal, as the left hand is the hand used to wipe your butt, and there are very few robberies there anymore.

Increasing Church Involvement

Another real benefit of this kind of situation is that church attendance will skyrocket and it will be much easier to meet people and form long term relationships. Churches will be a great way to organize and form communities, around those who survive. The Church was the major center of civilization, during the Middle Ages, in Europe, and will likely rise to prominence again in this kind of situation.

We will Be Healthier

This will have a moralizing influence upon the entire population. Many of our addictions to video games, junk food, the Internet, and sex will die down, as they will be hard to maintain, in this situation. Most people, who depend on modern medications, will become healthy enough, so

that they will no longer need those medications. And the polluted environment will finally have time to heal and future generations will live better lives, the sooner this happens.

4.9.3 Likelihood of this Situation

Somewhere in the Middle

The most likely thing to happen is some situation in between, where we are now, and the complete breakdown of modern life. We will likely have more disasters, both man-made and natural, in most parts of the world. The US will fare the best, compared to the rest of the world, from the more violent weather, caused by global warming.

American Future is Bright

We may not still be one nation, and we will we have a vastly different culture, but whoever lives in America as our descendants will do well, in almost any likely situation. The only conceivable event, that could destroy America, would be a once in a million years asteroid hit or a once in ten thousand years event, like the eruption of a super volcano.

4.10 Worst Case Scenario

4.10.1 First Obstacles

Full Scale Invasion of the US

One of the things, that scares Americans, in a Worst Case Scenario, is an invasion by China or Russia. Some might think this could be a possibility, if things get bad enough, in our struggle for limited oil, that we decide not to honor our debts, or some other hypothetical situation might happen, so that things get out of control, to the point, where our leaders feel they have no other choices. We can piece together what would happen, if we look at situations, that involved some of these factors, that have happened at

other times and places in history and the unique combination factors specific to the US, including: our geography, our demographics, our military readiness, and our willingness to accept loss.

Our Military Strength

Some people might think that a country as large and advanced as China or Russia could take us on and have a chance at winning. The biggest thing that protects America is that we are an ocean away from our major enemies and rivals. Even Hitler wasn't able to reach as far as America during World War II. It is certainly possible, with current technologies, but it is more expensive and slows things down significantly. If our enemies get that far, other factors will hold them back. The first is that our military is the best in the world and is 25 years ahead of the rest of the world, in things like stealth. Even the latest Russian technologies are not as reliable or have the same abilities in key areas, that would allow fewer US tanks, helicopters, aircraft, and ships to inflict as much damage as their opponents.

4.10.2 Secondary Obstacles

Special Forces and Intelligence

Another major factor, if we don't count in the conventional military, is that there are other agencies that would step in. We have very large army of intelligence agents and special forces, which could even, just by themselves, make the war so bloody, that there would be somewhere like 90% casualties. Think of what the success of a tiny group of terrorists can be when the target us. The intelligence agents and special forces use similar tactics, but are much better trained, much better armed, there are many more of them, and they have better intelligence, than those they are fighting against. They have been through training, that makes this kind of situation, as easy to operate in, as it does for a kid playing paintball.

More Sources of Weapons

You also have to figure that the US military has a whole range of technologies, that are unknown, to the rest of the world, but we are ready to use, if we needed them. We had laser guided weapons and night vision battlefield ready in the Vietnam War and we had a whole fleet of stealth fighter/bombers ready to go, when we bombed Libya in 1985. Another thing to consider is that in many rural areas of the United States, the local population is often armed to the teeth already. In many rural states it is legal to have fully automatic military-style assault rifles, and that right is exercised, by a large number of people. Many people have enough ammunition rounds, to last 20 years of war. Our Department of Defense has already planned and prepared, for every possible scenario, including this one.

4.10.3 Final Obstacles

Weapons of Mass Destruction

And as for weapons of mass destruction, we have them too in as large or larger quantities, so that we can drop the same stuff on them. Also, it is not possible to destroy all the nukes of ones side, because we have nuclear powered submarines with nuclear weapons. No one knows exactly where they are, except the captain on the ship, those missiles can reach anywhere in the world, and they can survive for years, without any more fuel and only need to briefly rise up, to get food, every 6 months. Even if we had a full nuclear war, with a major nuclear power like Russia or China, most people would survive, if they build a simple shelter in their houses. The kind of nuclear bombs, that would be dropped currently would be very small and targeted, because destroying the entire country's infrastructure makes the land gained much less valuable.

We Won Last Time

If the US were invaded, we would have instant unity, between the most fundamentalist Christians and the most extreme feminists. The last time we fought a major world power on US soil, during the Revolutionary War and War of 1812, we won. It is true that the end of the Revolutionary War was a stalemate and the British decided it wasn't worth it, but it doesn't matter how you win a war. The British were the biggest military power at the time and the US was just becoming a nation. In Vietnam, the communists never won a battle against the US and were technically losing the war, yet the US was forced to leave and the communists are still in power, decades later.

Final Limiting Factors

Having a much bigger army does not mean that you will win, even if you have technology that is almost as good. This was proven in a number of wars, when Arab armies fought against Israel. Also you have to consider that even the Soviet Union was forced out of Afghanistan because of public opinion even, with no free press. Another factor is that we would likely be able to arm and train resistance in China or Russia and take the war home to them and could quite possibly break down the public order in their countries.

Chapter 5

More Insights and Inspiration

by Ben Huot

5.1 The Power of One

5.1.1 The Individual

Don't Give Up

I am continuing my writing, in order to encourage others, that we can make a difference, as individuals. The bulk of my writing, before the depression started, in 2008, was trying to get people to realize that the problems in the world we keep hearing about are serious and need to be dealt with now, but that many people, who would be willing to make the sacrifices necessary, to make the world a better place, are just getting discouraged and think that it is time to just give up.

Just One Person

I just started reading a book written by the president of PETA, the animal rights organization, and she make a great case, for how we can make a difference, all by ourselves. Most people would give to charities, if they were wealthy, or try to change the government, if they were able to get into power, but much of history was changed, by a single person, who was just like everyone else, but decided to spend their years on earth making a difference, for others. A few people have changed history starting all by themselves.

5.1.2 As a Group

Lessons from History

In my life time, I have seen the Soviet Union fall apart and atheism lose political power. The Soviet Union was such a huge power that, even as a kid, we feared the Russians, to be our greatest enemy. For much of the Cold War, many Christians were afraid that the majority of the world would give up their faith in religion. My parents saw major changes, in tolerance, for those of other races,

within the span of just a decade, so that it is now unpopular and untolerated to be a racist. The US was winning the Vietnam War militarily and the war would have easily gone on, for another ten years, but it was cut short, by the the American people's unwillingness to let the issue go.

More Power than We Think

It is interesting, that we still do not seem to realize, that a government cannot keep itself in power, no matter how much power they have over their citizens, if they push things too far. The reason why the world is in the state it is, is because the US citizens may not want to be aware of some of the dirty things done to maintain our power, but basically expect someone to do those things, and that is the main reason why they are done. For instance, the reason why torture is likely still used, within the intelligence community, is not because it is thought to be useful or justified, by those who perform it, but that the leaders of the country would be held liable, if there were a terrorist attack and the people, who were involved, were in custody and did not give up the information needed to prevent the attack.

Power of American Citizens

Basically, Americans really don't care about what happens to non-Americans and feel justified in doing so, in order to maintain the kind of lifestyle, that we are used to. And yes, as always, I am referring to Americans, when I say we, as we have the ability, to change the world, as someone born in the third world does not have the resources, power, and the protection afforded by our civil rights. The really difficult thing, for us to accept very soon, is both the gravity of the situation, but also the great opportunity, that even one American has the ability to exercise, at little risk to themselves.

5.1.3 Keep Working Hard

The future is not set and we don't need to continue down this road. Things will change tremendously, in this generation, more than things have, for maybe thousands of years, and there will be some major losses, but there are also some great things, that will happen, that we cannot even imagine yet. God still has many wonderful surprises, for all of us. We just need to believe and take a chance.

5.2 Usefulness of Crises

5.2.1 Psychology of a Crisis

Local Example

I have spent about a year preparing, for surviving the end of the world, as we know it, caused by anything, from natural disasters, to the end of cheap oil. I wasn't happy, with the online communities, because people are so mean online, so I looked up about local Peak Oil advocates and I came across an interesting development and controversy. What had happened is that the local advocates brought this scenario, to the community government and after the case was presented, it was decided, that, instead of spending money, to become more self-sufficient energy wise, the budget was spent on improving the infrastructure, for increased car usage.

Apathy to Despair

This decision seemed to anger and frustrate those, who spent so much time and energy, to present their case, but I was not surprised. The things is that most people today consider not having electricity and modern plumbing is the same as being in the stone age and would likely just give up and wait to die, instead of working hard, to survive, in a more difficult situation. The problem is, when people are confronted with the possibility of a disaster, they quickly jump from apathy to despair.

Afraid of Hard Work

I think the big reason for this is that people who have grown up in the situation, that we are in now, have basically adopted the idea, that a successful society is one that: keeps on getting more and more advanced technologically, has fewer and fewer rules, and requires less and less effort, to keep it going. Since they have adopted this worldview, it is hard for them to think about the possibility, of losing this, and still surviving, in a rational manner. The only thing that seems to scare this last few generations is having to do an honest day's work.

5.2.2 Short Attention Span

Crises are Helpful

This may seem discouraging, but this situation has happened before and people will survive. I know it sounds cruel, but the fewer Americans who survive, the better it is, for those left. People will learn the value of hard work, but it is going to have to take a big shock, to get their attention. Unfortunately, Americans seem to jump from crisis to crisis, but have a hard time staying focused on the same thing, when there is no longer and imminent threat.

Understand the Reason Why

We have seen this happen with Homeland Security. The federal government spent tremendous amounts of time and money making sure, that we would never allow another tragedy like 9/11 to happen again and then, less than ten years later, we have the same problem, except the disaster was prevented, due to some fast thinking and brave airplane passengers. We also seem to gravitate between huge economic growth and huge depressions, which we could prevent with some simple oversight, but when no one is watching and the economy is going strong, we get rid of these important rules. We need to learn why things were set up the way they were before we start changing them.

Homeland Security Example

We also had a similar situation with joining the different intelligence and law enforcement agencies under the Homeland Security umbrella. The problem was that these agencies had been organized properly beforehand. We purposely separated the CIA and the FBI, even though it is inconvenient, in order to keep from these agencies from getting too powerful and end up like the SS or the KGB.

The other agencies were under different heads for equally legitimate reasons. Immigration does more than deal with terrorism. It also allows people to become citizens and the Coast Guard does more than just fight terrorism. They help in case of natural disasters and they help fight the war on drugs. And similar reasons explain why all the other agencies were arranged the way they were before we formed a Homeland Security cabinet position.

5.2.3 The Solution

Hit the Reset Button

One of the things that really differentiates post World War II America, from before, is that we have no frontier. We need to find a way, to start things over again, as a society, as well as have a way, for people, to start over, as individuals. A big enough disaster may just give us the opportunity, to reorganize the way society operates, into a more healthy way of life. The worst thing that could happen is that we never do get hit by a big disaster and we continue on this same path. Without a major disaster, we will learn to work harder and appreciate the opportunities we have, but it will happen much more slowly.

People are Irrational

Instead of trying to appeal to a person's rational awareness of the world, we need to realize, that people are lead, by their emotions, most of the time. Instead of fighting this, we need to just accept this. We need to stop debating and understand the psychology of the citizens we are

working with. This is the big reason why the government will never admit that we are low on oil, because that will cause the very disaster people are fearing.

People Cannot Decide

The government needs to do some things, without telling the people, and needs to avoid going through a public governmental process. Hard decisions need to be made and it does not matter so much what is decided, except that something must be decided and worked toward. The military understands this very well. Most people are not emotionally able, to make their own decisions, or to run their own government. The average person will never have the education or the inclination, to make hard decisions.

The big reason why the government is so indecisive is because the average citizen is indecisive. We seem to jump back and forward, between opposite approaches, to our problems. We are almost evenly divided, between 2 opposing camps, so we give those, who have the most trouble making decisions, the power, to determine our leadership and our future.

5.3 A Different World

5.3.1 Political and Social Changes

Defeat of Atheism

The reason why this is a turning point in history is not just a matter of the decline of the US or the decline of the world economy, but it is the culmination of the downfall of the human ability, to solve our own problems, especially through technology. If the war on terrorism has taught us nothing else is that creativity and drive beats wealth and technology. We have learned that even the smartest people in the room don't give you the right answers and that pride can beat even the wealthiest. Not only have we seen that we cannot rely on government, to save us, during Katrina, but that capitalism can self-destruct, just as quickly, as communism.

Ascension of Christianity

We used to be afraid that most of the world would lose their faith, but now we fear that people are taking their belief in God too far. During the last few centuries, the Church has seen a huge barrier, to its expansion and its very survival, in Europe and most of America now, but, in the same period, many times the population of America and Europe have converted to Christianity, in every other major continent, in the world. The biggest contribution from the US, to the world, may very well be Pentecostalism.

One World Economy

The US is not going to fall, unless the rest of the world does. What we have is a one world economy, so that no one really wants anyone else to fail, because even the slightest damage done, to one of the major economies, in the world, will damage the others, just as much. The flip side of the US's complete dependence on China for its manufacturing has the side effect of China depending on the US, for both its market and for its ability to produce so much of the world's food. Basically, if the US is hurt too bad, China not only goes bankrupt but starves.

US Power will be Regional

It is true though that the US will return to a more maintainable world status as a major world power instead of the only world superpower. Some of the most successful and happy years of our country came as a result of our ability to focus on our own problems, and let someone else be hated, for interfering, in world politics. It looks like China and Saudi Arabia might be the world's police force, in the future, and people will forget about the US, just as quickly as they forgot about how much they hated the UK, France, and Russia.

Biggest Changes

The next generation will most likely see the greatest changes, in the recorded history, but they will be more social, than technological. The biggest commodities of the future will not only be oil, but water and soil. One of the sad things, that will happen, in just a matter of time, will be the die off of a major part of the world's population, because there are just too many mouths to feed and most likely Africa and Southern Asia will be hit the hardest. The world balance of power will shift, as a direct result of climate change and weather will be the biggest destructive force and the major focus of national security in the future.

5.3.2 Future of Society and Technology

Do It Yourself

There will be many positive changes, especially social. People will be more focused on the local community and will be more self-sufficient. People will be more and more interested in creating things, rather than consuming things. The do-it-yourself community will grow immensely. The big thing that the web based economy will have to do to survive is to focus on selling novelty and the personalization of products.

Mass Media

If Hollywood survives, their market will not be on selling generic products, to a mass audience. Every form of media will be online and there will be no way to get people to pay for it. More and more social groups and individuals will come out with their own media and use it to further their agendas. I think making money purely by advertising will become less and less valuable, as there will be so many more places for ads and so many more companies out there, that they will get lost in the static.

The big companies will be the ones with Big Brands. The big thing that will separate the little players from the big ones will be a matter of how they differentiate them-

selves. Americans will no longer find it profitable to sell commodity products for commodity prices.

All Information Public

So much information will be available, that the information itself will be less important and the way to sift through it faster will be where the money is. Every piece of information will be available, for everyone, by some point in the future. Scams will become much more convincing as they will be able to make use of this information.

Insignificance of Government

The most important factor in your life will not be the country you live in, but the technology provider that you use to access media and the Internet. The big reason why governments will stop being as big a factor will be because they cannot move as fast as technology can, so people will stop using the government to help them, when someone commits a crime against them.

Huge Industries

People will pay others mainly to give themselves more free time. The thing that will take more time than anything else will be finding things. Even though all information will be online, there will be so much of it that being able to answer meaningful questions will be a major source of income for many businesses. One of the things that people might enjoy most is having a break from technology and creating devices, that are fashionable and easy to use, will be a huge business.

Reaction Against Technology

Eventually people will actually start putting technology into their bodies. About this time, there will be a major reaction against technology and many people will try to exist off grid, but it will be much harder to do so, then

ever before. Just like we all have phone numbers and email addresses, but don't have to have them, the same will be true of our access to the Internet and services that help us make sense of all the information.

5.3.3 Why I Am Certain

The Future is Now

One of the reasons why I can say these things with such certainty about the future is because these things are already happening. The reason why they seem futuristic to many people is that they are not mainstream yet because people aren't emotionally ready for them. The biggest changes in the future will be social, not technological.

Computers are Dumb

The big thing in technology, that will take a very long time, if it is ever possible, unless we find some other advanced technology some other way than inventing it by ourselves, computers will not be much smarter in the near future. Many people are afraid of computers taking over the world, but the most advanced robot in the world can just barely walk upright on two feet up stairs.

Problem with Engineers

The social revolutions will be much like what Facebook is now and the reason why it was not done ten years earlier was not a technological problem, but a social one. People were afraid to give out personal information, when the web first came out, although it was designed originally for two way communication. This is the exact reason why the biggest challenge to change in technology is the older generation, especially the engineers.

The Next Generation

Science Fiction writers with little or no knowledge of science often in-vision some of the greatest technological leaps. The first people to adopt a new technology will

always be the youngest generation and one of the key things that holds us back is that our leaders are so old and unimaginative. Some of this will only happen as that generation dies off.

Applications to Politics

These things all sound like they are only related to technology, but the same thing occurs on a political level as well. The big reason why I see the major climate changes, shifts of power, and wars over resources will happen is because people are not emotionally willing to make the changes necessary to avoid these changes.

Not all changes are bad, but people who seek to influence people of the future need to understand not just history, but modern psychology, as well. Philosophy is much less important. The real great thing that philosophy provides is training in thinking rationally for yourself, plus philosophy is also a humanity and the humanities encourage cross-discipline study, more than any of the sciences or social sciences. When you study Asian philosophy, you are studying Asian history, Asian religion, Asian literature, Asian art, and Asian music.

5.4 Finding Your Approach

5.4.1 Background

Rationale

It is true, that people tend to be unwilling to change and unwilling to listen to rational arguments and, as individuals, we have little power, to changes the way things are, on a grand scale. But this does not mean that we need to give up. Just like in a job, who you know is more important than what you know. Also, when you want something right, you need to do it yourself. The reality is you can get a lot of people to do small things, if you appeal to their emotions, but the most important and the bulk of the work must be done by you and maybe a few others.

Easier Routes

The most important factors, in determining your ability, to influence the future, is to never give up, work much harder than everyone else and to be creative. There are some things that you could do that would be very valuable, but they take a lot of money to do. Avoid these things. One of the big things we can now do, with minimal funding necessary, is to advertise and distribute information online.

5.4.2 Information Laws and Rules

Major Laws

Before you do this, make sure you are not violating any laws, because there is a very good chance that you will get caught, sooner rather than later. The big laws you need to worry about, beyond the obvious ones about not scamming people, making things up about people that are not true, distributing drugs, or other similar things are copyright, privacy, patent, and trademark laws. Copyright problems are the most common.

Ask Permission First

The easy way, to avoid running into a violation of someone's copyright, is to understand that everything is copyrighted automatically, as soon as it is created, and that you should ask people's permission, before using anything, that you have not created yourself. Copyrights cover everything, that is a creative work (in the broadest sense), so copyrights can include software, any kind of media like books, pictures, music, and the like. Patents cover a specific implementation of an idea and the patent laws, that you are most likely to run into, are about software and file format patents.

Copyrights

Copyright laws are in some way very logical and in other ways make little sense. You cannot copyright a short phrase,

lists, fonts, or designs. You do not need to register, pay money, or to put copyright notices on your work, to protect your work with a copyright. Copyright laws only extend back a short amount of time. Book copyrights only go back to the 1920s, so anything done before then is not copyrighted, but modern translations (done after 1920) of earlier works are still copyrighted. You need to understand every license, that you have, before you use any piece of software. There are a few major categories of licenses, for programs and they can vary widely, but the main concepts are very similar.

5.4.3 Software Rules

Proprietary Programs

The first one is a proprietary program, like Microsoft Word or Adobe Photoshop. Both these programs are considered to be licensed to you and you need to pay, for each copy that you use. One copy means being on one computer at a time. Sometimes, you are allowed to have it on both a laptop and a desktop, but you can't use them at the same time. Many companies, governments, and non-profits often buy a license, for a certain number of users. Many people steal these programs and you probably won't be caught, but if you use them for business and they find out, you can get big fines. The way they find out is that one of the people working for you reports you and gets a big cash reward in exchange.

Variety of Proprietary Licenses

The software companies, who design these programs, often offer better deals, for those who work in education, usually just students and teachers, and for individuals that are not producing anything, that they will make money for. Legally, it would be better to outright pirate (steal) the software, than to use an academic license, for something you are going to sell. The educational licenses are getting stricter and stricter. Some companies monitor whether you are still in school and how many classes you

are taking and can revoke your license remotely.

Open Source Licenses

Some people do not like these kinds of restrictions on software, so they use what is called open source software. This basically means, that you can use the software and distribute it all you want, but if a programmer changes the source code and distributes the modified program, then they need to give away their source code as well. Not all open source licenses require this though. Another advantage of open source software is that it survives, even if the company producing it goes out of business, or decides to stop developing it. Open source programs generally use free and open file formats, so you can usually take your work into other programs, to edit or view.

Other Common Licenses

Some other major categories of software include shareware and freeware. Freeware is free, but with the condition that you cannot distribute it, without getting permission. Shareware usually means that a program has a certain time limit or is limited, in what you can do with it, until you buy the program. Other names for shareware include demo ware, donation ware, trial ware and other similar terms.

5.4.4 Media Rules

Background

There are different types of licenses, for media, than for software, which includes every kind of writing, graphics, designs, audio, video, and multimedia. The same concepts apply as before with software. Ask someone's permission, before you use something, that someone else created. No matter what license is given, any rights to the media not specifically granted are retained by the copyright holder and you never get the copyright, unless you get permission stating exactly that. There are also things

called moral rights, which means that if you use the images in a way that make someone look bad, then you have to get the rights to these as well. Some of the restrictions on copyrights, when you don't have moral rights, include using the media for things like pornography, racism, or promoting drug use.

Privacy Laws

One of the rules, that is unique, to media, are privacy laws. It is illegal, to use someone's image without their consent, unless you recorded the person in photo or video, in a public place. So, before you use anyone's image, be sure to get them to sign a written permission. Also, I recommend not using pictures of children or women of any age. I just avoid people entirely. More and more things are copyrighted, like the insides of buildings and museum art. The main principle to remember is, if it is not a public space, get permission, before you use the images, or video.

Royalty Free

Many designers keep a number of design elements like fonts, illustrations, photos, video clips, and sound effects, for later projects. The most popular licenses are called royalty free, meaning that once you pay for it, you do not need to pay again, no matter how many copies you distribute. You need to check the exact license, because there are often different fees, for different usages like web, TV, or print. There are also restrictions, to try to keep you from selling these same media collections to others. Generally, most clipart, stock photos and fonts are royalty free.

Creative Commons

There is a new license system, that has come out, in the last 10 years and is mainly used on the Internet. Creative Commons licenses include 4 main parts and most any combination of those. The 4 things, that can be allowed

by the creator, without permission, are commercial use, free modification, free distribution, and no credit. So any Creative Commons license can allow or disallow any number of these things. So for instance, I license my books, to allow people to distribute them for free and use them for commercial use, but do not allow modification, and they have to give me credit. I license most of my photos, to allow people to modify them, as long as they give me credit and they allow anyone else, to modify their modification, of my original work.

Public Domain

Public Domain licenses allow you to do anything, with the media in question, without even needing to give credit, or having any others restrictions. After copyrights expire, which currently happens for books 75 years after the authors death, or 90 years after it was written, which ever comes first, they became public domain. This is the main reason why theaters love to do Shakespeare (because there are no royalties, that need to be paid). One of the things, that people think is public domain, that is not is the traditional happy birthday song.

5.4.5 Other Information Laws

Patents

Patent laws usually only affect those publishing media, by having to pay royalties, to use certain patented computer concepts. Some of these are file formats that include MP3, if you use it on a large scale, and recently MP4 video, for any use. I know this sounds terrible and it makes little sense, but because there are so many patents in video compression, that many think it is not possible, to come up with a video compression, that is good enough, to be practical and not violate someone's patent.

Some people have recently tried to sue people for using JPEGs, accessing any files over any network, web browser plugins and equally stupid patents. The big way, to get a lot of money, for not doing anything, is to file a

patent, for an obvious and trivial idea, and then wait ten years, for everyone to adopt it, mainly doing so because it appeared to not violate any patents, and then sue a rich company, for violating your patent. This is not how patents were intended to work.

Trademarks

When you start a new company, you can get in trouble, if you use the same name, as another company, in the same industry, especially if the name is not a generic and obvious name. For instance, if you start an office company and you call it Apple, you have no problem, but if you start a software business and call it Apple, you will get into trouble. Logos are not industry specific, so if you make a logo, for any business, that looks like a bite out of an apple, expect Apple, to force you, to change your logo.

Chapter 6

Topics in Religion and History

by Ben Huot

6.1 History Proves Christianity is Asian

6.1.1 My Home Towns

Springfield vs. Eugene

The town I grew up in, Springfield, Oregon, is considered to be a very conservative and working class town. It used to be a logging town and now the economy is more based on the largest hospital in the area, that has expanded tremendously, very recently. The town I now live in, Eugene, Oregon, borders Springfield on the west side. Eugene is considered to be a very liberal town, very anti-business, and its economy is based around the University of Oregon and the local community college. Eugene is famous for having most the really violent anarchists living here, that gave a bad name, to some world trade organization protests, especially one time in Seattle.

Mixed Realities

The truth actually is somewhere in the middle. There are many progressives, that live in Springfield and many conservatives live in Eugene. The neighborhoods vary widely, even within a couple of blocks, in both cities. Eugene is presently the larger city and Springfield is growing much faster, mainly because the cost of housing is so much cheaper, in Springfield. I lived practically my whole life, up until I became 18 in Springfield and have lived practically the entire time since then in Eugene. The big reason why I live in Eugene is that I am much closer to main bus lines and areas that I shop at and find entertainment at.

Typical Oregonians

Most people who live in Oregon are very unfriendly, idealistic, small-town minded, and anti-traditional religion. More serial killers come from Oregon and Washington then from any other states. Most people in Eugene are

over 50 or students going to college. This is because, even before the economic depression in 2008, Oregon had very few jobs. Many people, with advanced degrees, work minimum wage jobs, if they can even get them, due to competition, with illegal immigrants.

Lack of Government Income

We are also one of the few states, without any sales taxes and a few years ago property taxes were removed, due to a myth that the only people paying property taxes were small, poor, family farms. Most farmers are actually very rich. Land is expensive and so is farm equipment. The lack of taxes benefited the large businesses, like the hospital and the dwindling timber industry. Several high tech firms came here, while they were exempted from taxes, for a few years, and then quickly left.

What Kind of Liberal?

Many of my perspectives on education are based on my experiences here. There are many different ways of being liberal, but the liberal element in Eugene is liberal in the sense of being very extreme in its feminist views, its white guilt, and its anti-Christian bias. Basically, the big stereotypes in the area is against white male Christians. Some of this is intensified by having very few people of color or Christians in this area. My experiences in both grade school and in community and university college reflected this.

6.1.2 Worldwide Perspective

My Academic Experience is Typical

It seems that my experience with feminism being the major emphasis in college is not unique. The majority of books I read on history constantly berate white Christian males, as causing all the problems in the world. This is simply not historically accurate. The problems that made Asia weak in the Middle East, South Asia, and East Asia

happened well before France and England became world empires. Furthermore, if western Europeans hadn't taken over much of the world that the Ottoman Empire would likely have conquered Europe and Christianity would be an obscure African religion.

Christianity was Always Asian

During European Medieval times (also known as the Asian Golden Age) Christianity was strongest in the Middle East and on the Silk Road and before Christianity was legalized in the Roman Empire, there were already small Christian communities in Southern India (Kerala). The Roman Catholic Church was only one of four or five different centers of Christianity and was the least important academically, financially, and politically. There never was just one original Christian church structure.

Persecution of Christians

Half the Ottoman Empire was Christian as late as 1900. All the areas that the successors to Mohammed conquered were all Christian and stayed that way for hundreds of years. Many historians decry the persecution of Jewish people in Europe, but the persecution of Christians in the Islamic empires was much worse. The concept we now called ethnic cleansing was done to the Christians who lived in the Middle East for hundreds of years. The word genocide originates as a word to describe how Syriac Christians were persecuted in the Middle East.

Christians in the Modern Middle East

The main Christian group in Lebanon is a descendant of the Syriac Christians as well as 10% of both Egypt and Syria. Many times, when you see on the news, that Palestinians are referred to as entirely Muslim, you hear some local Palestinians say they are Christian. Christians have done much worse under the new Iraqi government and most Iraqi refugees were Christian, although they only

make up a small percent of the general population. Much of the violence in Darfur is Muslims against Christians.

Christians were the Indigenous Population

The Syriac Christians were the descendants of the people who originally live in the Middle East and during Biblical times were known as Assyrians and Babylonians. The people now known as the Arabs lived originally in the place now called Saudi Arabia and are in so many countries in the Middle East, because they ruled it for over a thousand years. The big reason for the Crusades was to liberate some of the local Christians in the area and take back the land previously taken from Christian rule. The Inquisition happened at the end of the time, when the Spanish finally liberated their country, from the Muslims. It makes sense that the Spanish were extra vigilant about the purity of their people's faith, as it the land was ruled by Muslim Empires, for hundreds of years just prior.

Mostly Poor and Non-White

Most of the Christian world now lives in poverty in the third world in Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia. There are very few Christians left in Europe and a very small minority of them are white. Islam is a bigger force in Europe than Christianity and there are more terrorists in a number of Western European countries than there are in a number of the countries in the Middle East. There are many African churches, who are sending missionaries to Europe.

Myth of the Rich White Christian

The idea of the rich white Christian is a very rare situation, that only was true for a few hundred years in Europe and America, while the Western leaders were giving up their faith in Christ. Christianity outnumbers Islam 2 to 1 worldwide and is growing at a much faster pace, with most of the remaining strongly leaning to Christianity. Christianity has only been allowed, in most of these

countries, for the last hundred years, but Islam has been converting in these areas in Africa and Southeast Asia, for over a thousand years. Christianity has a dominant presence in the Philippines, Korea, and now in China.

Global Relevance of Christianity

The Koran must be read in Arabic and people becoming Muslim take on the history of the Arabic people. The Bible has been translated and can be accurately understood in almost any language. The only history that Christians take on is the history of Israel. Most African Christians were converted by fellow black Africans and many places in the third world believe that Christianity is more culturally relevant than Islam. Ethiopia has been Christian from the same time that the Roman Empire legalized Christianity and has been almost completely isolated from Europe most of that time.

6.2 What Faith Means to Genuine Devotees

6.2.1 Types of Religious People

Reasons for Conversion

One of the downsides, to the dominance of historians, who have an anti-supernatural bias, is that much of the world, throughout history and most of the world today is religious and they usually underestimate the significance of religion. Many people choose different religions, for different reasons. Some people convert to a religion, because they are opportunists and they believe that they will do better financially and/or politically. This can be because they believe in the supernatural, and they think that one God is more powerful than another.

Another reason would be that they believe that the religion will serve the purpose of their career advancement by means of a socially powerful force. Some people, though, actually believe the religion to be true and to be

either the only way to God or a much better faith, because it makes their life better, or it makes other people's lives better. Often times, either way, that political loyalty and religious loyalty imply ones loyalty to one as loyalty to both.

When Faith is Ultimate Loyalty

But, oftentimes, if the person is genuinely devoted to the religion and not just, to what it gets them, or their country, then the religion is more important to them and their loyalties will be religious, at the cost of patriotism, family ties, or fame/money. I, for instance consider myself to be loyal to the Christian God, and that even my family comes after that.

This often scares non-religious and religious people alike, because a lot of people, with supreme loyalty to their faith will do whatever they think their religion tells them to do, even if this can result in irrational and unpredictable behaviors. For most people, who really understand their religion, as a consistent worldview and have enough common sense, not to do what one particular scripture says, without factoring in the main concepts of their faith, (which are generally moral and productive to stable societies) there is little to worry about, especially in the unpredictability factor.

6.2.2 Characteristics of Genuine Devotee

Predictability

There is always going to be a certain instability, when you start factoring in faith, because part of faith is going beyond the rational, into things that cannot be proved, as that is what the word faith literally means. But to people, who follow a major branch of their faith, are not creative in a dangerous way, and not person that likes taking unnecessary risks, people of faith can, at the very least, be predictable. Really, the same kind of person, who you would not trust, if they were a person motivated by prestige or money is the same kind of person you wouldn't

trust, who is motivated by faith.

Some people will be irrational, regardless of motivation and having someone of faith on your side means, at least, there is some kind of a moral angle in the motivation, which makes their loyalty much more predictable and also makes them more worthy of trust. A person motivated by just money or what they think is good for a group of people can be just as irrational and divided in loyalty, as someone of faith, who is not in their right mind and is unreasonable, in the logic, used in defense of their doctrines.

Any belief system that is moral will have good reasons for their doctrines, that can be understood, by others, who don't believe. Someone, who is open with their beliefs, is very likely to be extremely honest and public in their practice, if they really believe that their faith is legitimate. Fundamentally, a genuine person of faith is much more transparent and consistent, if not more moral, than those motivated by nationalistic or career advancement reasons.

More Willing to Follow

People easily find other ways, to get what they want, for them or their group, when their motivation goes no higher and they meet an impasse. But a person of genuine, rational, and open faith is someone who puts socially useful limits, on what they will do, to push an agenda. The only situation, in which you wouldn't want to trust a person of faith is when you are both doing things that are immoral and you pressure the person of faith to take part in this. As far as Christianity is concerned, the Bible very clearly says for us to follow all laws, unless we cannot do what the Bible commands.

The bottom line is that a person of faith is the kind of person that follows rules, that are given by others, even if they don't want to follow them. They are willing to sacrifice their immediate desires, for what they believe is more important morally, in the long run. The only way you can get an opportunist to do so, is by convincing them, that following laws, gets them their objective or that their

objective would be undermined, by their breaking the rules.

6.3 Problems with Church Unity

6.3.1 Historical Background

Major Divisions

Many Christians seek to unite the entire Christian church and get rid of all the divisions and denominations. Some are closer than others and some Christian churches are more interested in joining together than others. One of the biggest divides in the church in America is the Evangelical branches and Liberal or Mainline Protestant branches of major American denominations like in the Methodist and Presbyterian churches. There are a number of theological, historical, and political reasons or a mixture of both in the divisions of the churches, especially the Protestant churches, over time.

The Halloween Coalition

There are good reasons why the Evangelical and Mainline Protestant branches would have trouble uniting. If God worked a miracle and both groups were willing to make major changes one in politics and the other in theology, it could work, but the scenario is as likely as what is referred to as the Halloween coalition, in American politics, where extreme conservatives and extreme liberals find commonality enough, to launch a third party, capable of defeating the American 2 party system. There must be some fear of this, because during the last few presidential campaigns (probably after seeing the success of Ross Perot) local police have been used to keep secondary candidates, like Ralph Nader and Pat Buchanan, from showing up at the presidential debates.

Minor Attempts at Unity

For most Evangelical denomination branches in the US, it is probably hard for most members to tell the difference in the theology, if they joined another Evangelical church. Definitely Churches work together, for things like homeless shelters and for disaster relief. There was an Evangelical cross-denomination movement for men, called Promise Keepers. I don't know if it is still going though. I don't find an easy fit in either the Evangelical or Mainline Protestant churches, the first due to the politics and the second due to theology, but I am very unusual and ahead of my time.

6.3.2 Challenges

Roman Catholic Church Problem

The Roman Catholic church combines those two aspects, but not very neatly, and I also have a low opinion of the Roman Catholic church, for its arrogance and inaccuracy in telling everyone that they are the original and only true Christian church and that they have been responsible for most the big persecutions in Church history. The Catholic church was responsible for everything from: the Crusades, the Inquisition, the safe passage of NAZI war criminals, and the mixing of Christianity with Animism in Latin America. And my biggest complaint: the persecution of churches, not affiliated with the Roman Catholic church, when they sent missionaries to parts of the world cut off from other Christian, for centuries (who were Christians before anyone in the West was a Christian).

Chance for Failure

For any churches to be brought together successfully, every member must be onboard, because if anyone splits, we would then have even more divisions, than ever before. And in some parts of the world, the indigenous Christian churches would do more for Christianity, to stay separate, from European originated churches. I can appreciate

why the Evangelical and Mainline Protestant churches had to split. I think the Evangelicals started more as a theological-based split, with the focus on Evangelism (recruiting new members) and keeping to a rigid theology, to keep from having Christianity losing essential theology, which would have transformed the church into something that didn't follow what the Bible said.

6.3.3 Points of View

Evangelical Perspective

Certainly, from many of the strange opinions on the Internet, including things like: outright cults, combinations of Paganism and Christianity, Gnosticism, and other obvious perversions of Biblical doctrine, all claiming the title Christian, I can see that there reasoning is relevant today as it was when they started. There are obvious others, but I think most Evangelical Christians are aware of those. I think a lot of this comes from the Church rejecting education and people not understanding what the Bible actually says, by not reading the Bible, church leaders not being thorough in explaining theology, and people deliberately trying to push certain political agendas, very similar to and would help prove many of the popular conspiracy theories.

Mainline Protestant Perspective

I also similarly feel the pain of the Mainline Protestant churches, from a political point of view. We have Christians trying to justify torture of people not even proved to be enemies, the forfeiture of several very important constitutional rights, the creation of organizations whose purpose and structure are very similar to those set up in NAZI Germany and Soviet Russia, the removal of every law that prevented the Great Depression from reoccurring and another Great Depression following, the removal of almost all environmental laws, the invasion of a nation that had not attacked us, was a former ally, the occupation of done by volunteers, because of the cowardice

of Congress not issuing a draft, and the situation made worse for everyone involved, the same failure that caused 9/11 happened less than 10 years later, the complete failure of our disaster management agencies to deal with an inevitable hurricane, and on and on.

6.3.4 Chance of Success

Making the Situation Worse

One big lessons, from history, as to the possible outcome, of even a very obvious and popular movement, with groups very similar in both theology and politics, is that it can easily backfire and make inter church relations much worse. If there is an defection or suspicion of the process, things could end up like, when the leaders of the political regimes supporting the Ethiopian church and the Eastern Orthodox church, both, at different times and places, asked for help from the Catholic church. In both cases, the political situation and the survival of the church in that part of the world was dire and it seemed like the differences were more political then theological, but when those leaders renounced their versions of Christianity and accepted the Roman Catholic church, the people who also were the members of those churches revolted.

Don't Try this at Home

To sum up, this is a good idea ideally, but it would never work in practice. The best and only way, for this to happen, without making the situation worse, would be to pray for it. But never bring up the idea to Evangelicals and by no means use my name, as many Evangelicals think I am New Age, even though they don't have the knowledge to make that judgement and I do.

6.4 Subtlety and Moderation

6.4.1 Background

Make it Happen

I am a person of extremes. I am a passionate person, when it comes to ideology. If I do decide to do something, that I think is important, I do it with all my strength. I never half do something. I am persistent in things I find important and am so stubborn, that I keep at something, until I am able to finish it. I often times circle around a subject, look over the major terrain, sort through the information later on, like zooming in on a photo, I finally find the right angle, and I go in for the kill. It is good, to have strength of character, conviction, and commitment, to following through, with what you believe in.

Subtle in Subtlety

On the other hand, subtlety and moderation are equally important, as I am finding more and more, in my life. I even would say that moderation and subtlety are the keys, to a happy life and getting along well, with others. But a person can go to extremes, even in being moderate and subtle. Remember to be subtle, in your moderation and moderate, in your subtlety. No one likes a person who splits hairs and makes things more complicated, than they need to be.

Schizophrenia

I have found, that with Schizophrenia, that I experience life, in a much more amplified way. For me, Schizophrenia increases my emotions, exponentially. I tend to enjoy activities, that have little interaction and require little thought. I enjoy food, that is simple and not strong in taste. I don't like: strong cheeses, spicy ingredients, food that is hot in temperature, too much sugar, too much oil, I find chips too salty, I can only eat a small amount of chocolate and like dark chocolate the least, I don't like

most nuts, and I don't like hard candy. Moderation makes my mental illness more manageable.

6.4.2 Techniques

Being Assertive

One of the keys, to getting along with others, is to be assertive, but not aggressive. In other words, to get people to cooperate, with you, you need to both not appear weak and at the same time be gentle enough, so that you don't anger them or scare them away. Subtlety is important in writing, as well. Politicians, who are basically the popular crowd, are very good at not offending anyone and making everyone feel, that their views are being represented.

Popularity and Politics

The problem is that while people agree on most things in general, the details are what make or break the effort. When politicians get into office, they start making decisions, and inevitably disappoint, at least part, of their supporters. Politicians are hated mainly because they never want, to commit, to anything, or accept blame, for when things go bad. People don't feel that politicians are being honest. So, when you add moderation, to your life, and learn to be more subtle, be sure to use these ideas sparingly. Think of moderation and subtlety, as the outer shell, but your passion should provide the bulk of who you are.

Be Patient

Most important, you must be honest, with yourself, and accept who you are. Sometimes things we would like, to change about ourselves, are just part of who we are and help us more, than they hurt us. Many things, that we think we need to completely remove, from our personalities may just need a minor adjustment. An example for this would be writing, to be understood, while still not insulting people, by making them feel you are beating them

over the head, with your ideas. And some of the things, that really bother us, about ourselves do need to change, but we need to be patient, because major life changes aren't going to happen, over night.

6.4.3 Challenges

Oversimplification

Some of the problems the communists had, with ruling over a population, were due to their lack of subtlety. This is also a major American problem, as well. When we see many people on the news, that hate us and most of them are Muslim, we start to think that maybe the Koran teaches violence. It is likely that Osama Bin Laden is more popular, in most of the Muslim world, than the American President, but this does not mean that every Muslim is willing to act out in violence, against people, that can't defend themselves.

Liberals vs. Conservatives

Many liberals in America jump to some very wild and inaccurate about their impression of Evangelical Christians and vice versa. Many liberals think that Christians and radical Muslims approve of the same kind of treatment of women and that because they believe in something, by faith, that they cannot be smart or rational. Many Evangelical Christians think that liberals are unpatriotic, want to remove constitutional rights, and control the media. When we cannot see subtleties, in how we and others believe, we intensify the conflicts, over religion and politics.

Theory of Elections

One of the reasons why I think, that Americans vote for candidates, that alter back and forth, between 2 extremes, is because most of the population is reactive, rather than proactive. Just like our unwillingness to be disciplined in what we eat, how we spend our money, and in how we use computers, so we are unwilling, to make choices, that require sacrifice, in the short term, for long term happiness.

Businesses are in Control

And businesses have realized this and have exploited this, for their own gain. It isn't a coincidence, that, when we do well economically, that we cut taxes, on the wealthy and remove regulations on businesses and when things go bad, we interfere, with the government, so that the same businesses don't go bankrupt. We do the same in the stock market as well: we invest in companies, when they are at their peak and sell them, after they start dying and continue to lose money.

Leadership and History

Throughout history, many leaders were people of extremes, as well. Just like very few people, who are religious, bother studying about any other religion, so leaders, that were good at some aspects of governing, were unwilling to gain other ranges, of expertise. One of the big choices, that affected a nation's survival was whether the national government should be strong and put a minority of the population in power, or to allow regional areas and people of other ethnicities share power. Going to either extreme is usually not the best, but it is hard to take a middle course and what to do, in ruling a country, varied widely, on what country you were leading.

6.4.4 First Steps

The Middle Way

Buddhism is famous, for being the middle way, because Buddha rejected asceticism and hedonism, alike. Christianity is too, in many ways. Christianity is a religion of moderation: between being mortal and feeling pain and being spiritual and confident of eternal joy, between law and heart, between reason and faith, being sure of salvation and yet in control of your own destiny, and between be saved from sin, but to try not to, even though you often fail.

Find Your Path

Many people think, that pleasure and pain are complete opposites, but that doesn't work, that way, in extremes. The Epicureans were widely thought, to have a philosophy of pleasure, but these philosophers realized, that extreme pleasure can bring pain. Some good examples, of this, are: addictions, ambitions, and self-esteem. Being moderate, by following rules and finding pleasure outside of work are both important. Embrace paradox, and find your own middle path, but start slowly.

6.5 What are the Humanities?

6.5.1 Major Fields of Academic Study

The Sciences

The humanities consist of every kind of academic study, that is not a natural science, an applied science, or a social science. Some of the major natural sciences are: physics, chemistry, and biology. Applied sciences apply scientific methods to different technical disciplines, including things like: engineering, research and development, and medicine. The social sciences came, as a result of the European Enlightenment and are an application of science and math, to explain people and cultures. Social sciences include: anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, linguistics, political science, psychology, and sociology.

The Humanities

The humanities include every kind of academic discipline, relating to culture, that existed before the Enlightenment and social sciences were developed. The humanities include: ancient and modern languages, literature, law, history, philosophy, religion, visual art, music, and performing arts (like dance and theatre). The humanities study the same thing, as the social sciences, namely cultures, but differ in their approaches. The humanities are a way to understand what is important, to another culture, by

studying what has survived, of what the culture has created, rather than using the scientific method. In other words, the humanities are more subjective, than objective, in their perception of the world, which makes their perspective broader and more honest.

Advantages of the Human Approach

The humanities tend to be more cross-discipline, as, in many cases, especially in the Asian humanities, compared to the social sciences, in that studying literature often means the same as studying philosophy, religion, history, and art because many of these classics are literary, historically, and philosophically significant. The humanities are also more culturally and historically relevant, than social sciences, because they let ancient and Non-European cultures speak for themselves, rather than using scientific principles, as the primary sources were often written by the same group of people, that they were writing about, and are so old, that the concepts of science and social didn't exist yet.

6.5.2 Variety of Areas to Study

Cultural Exchanges

The part, that really interests me most, in the process of learning about cultures and the humanities, is the mixture and cross-pollination, of belief systems and creative works. Many of the most interesting belief systems brought ideas, from other belief systems, so that the result often brought together the best of both worlds. I think that studying culture is exciting, because different groups of people, who live even in the same country, often have very different: religions, histories, languages, ethnicities, geographies, allegiances, values, goals, and worldviews.

Variety of Asian Cultures

Asian cultures are so much more interesting, than European one, because their history tends to be much longer,

the quality of the creative work is much higher, and the field is much broader. When you study about Asian culture, you really are studying 3 or 4 different cultural areas, each as diverse, as all of Europe. China, which influenced mostly East Asia, India, which influenced mostly South and Southeast Asia, the Middle East, which influenced mostly Southwestern Asia and North and East Africa, and Central Asia, which influenced mostly the Silk Road, Eastern European, and Russian crossroads are all very different.

6.5.3 Importance of All Methods

Usefulness of Sciences

The social and natural sciences, especially earth sciences, meteorology, economics, and psychology, in particular, give this generation and the ones succeeding it insights, into how, to make the most of our resources and predict, prepare for, and explain the current trends, that will shape our future. We now have the opportunity, to make better use, of our circumstances and our abilities now, that we have more ways, to see the world. In other words, we have the potential, to have much more control, over our future. The thing, that I hope we don't lose, along the way, is the humanities approach, to education. If we lose that, then there will be little left, to live for, even if we secure a better future, for ourselves.

Usefulness of Humanities

Just like we need people, to run our sewage and waste removal systems, our national, criminal, and environmental defenses, our education, health, and safety, and other support needed, for basic survival, if we don't have purpose and meaning in life, than we are no longer human. While the natural and social sciences do a good job in showing us ways, to keep the system, from breaking down, the reason for the system only becomes apparent, if we continue our written culture. Without engineers, doctors, and soldiers we would not be able to live, but without philoso-

phers, theologians, writers, and artists, there would be little point in keeping things going.

6.6 America and the British Empire

6.6.1 America

Greater Purpose

I have thought for a long time, without enough evidence to explain it, that the greater purpose of America, in the eyes of its leaders, is the same as that of the British Empire. I was going to devote a considerable amount of time and effort, to develop a complete explanation, of the connection. The funny thing is, that I had already understood it, quite well, from several other angles and had not attached as much significance to it, which is primarily explained, by my fairly unique perspective, on world history.

Directions Taken

This connection had eluded me, because I had assumed, that it was more complex and hidden. Ironically, throughout English and American History, society has consistently been moving, in, what I call a socially liberal direction, to be distinguished from my very different economically liberal political views. In other words, the common people have been given more and more freedoms, in areas such as religion and speech. I still hold that power was never given up and that the ideology of democracy does not reflect how America is governed.

Relative Importance

So the heritage, that connects America with England, is basically a development of the European Enlightenment. So, in realizing the simplicity in this view of the world, I have decided, as before, that modern European history just isn't as interesting, to study or as significant, in world history, as the Asian Golden Age, which confirms my whole emphasis on history and ideology. I think that

the main reason why people of other countries don't understand Americans, is because we are naive about world history. This is because we do not learn about any history other than our own in public schools. One of the reasons why Americans feel so bad about America's role in the world is because they have nothing to compare it to.

America is Not So Different

I really believe that America is an Empire (it is definitely an Empire, when the country extends, from one side of the continent, to the other) and that we did kill off the native population, when we came over, to this continent. But, this is a continually repeated theme, throughout history. Almost every major empire has slaughtered those, who got into their way. The reality is America is no better or worse, than any other nation. Americans need to stop seeing everything, as we are told, by our government. We are being manipulated and made to feel bad about something we are not in control of and secondly are no different than anyone else.

6.6.2 Europe

Why I Criticize Europe

Many people, who read much of my writing, may think that I look down on Europe, for being a world bully or that European cultures are generally not as refined as most Asian ones. But this is not true. Again, Europe is no better than any other continent. The thing that motivates my criticism is that there is so much Anti-American sentiment coming from major European media about how American's caused all the problems in the world. The reason why I know this is not true is that America did not even exist, when these problems were fully developed.

European Realities

Many Europeans like to think of themselves as very cultured and peace loving, but they almost destroyed them-

selves through almost 3 world wars. Many European nations also had major colonies well into the 1970s. Even though it might appear as though I am disparaging the state of life in Europe during Medieval times, because of my description of the common people's poverty, I actually think that Medieval Europe, in many ways, was more ideal, than the present time, or during the Enlightenment. My views on world history are spiritual in nature and I do not think more highly of Asia, because of their greater wealth, during this period.

Strengths and Weaknesses

It is true that America has no culture. But we also haven't invented chemical weapons, car bombs, machine guns, tanks, and modern terrorist techniques. Americans also have no great pieces of architecture like cathedrals and castles, but we do have more trees left. American politics are run by big businesses, but so are European politics. Europe has much more advanced infrastructure than America, but in America our population density is much lower.